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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume IX

JULY, 1940

Number I



Benode Mukherjee.





## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

We are glad that Gurudeva is back in the asrama from the hills on July 3. He kept his 80th birthday at Mangpu where his hosts Dr. & Mrs. Sen arranged a pleasant function to mark the occasion. He left for Kalimpong the same day, spending the rest of the holidays in the seclusion of the Gouripur Lodge. The rest and the bracing climate of the hills have done his health some good, though the successive shocks of the recent bereavements and of the armageddon in Europe have weighed heavily on his mind and impaired much of the good effects of the rest. He arrived in Calcutta on June 29 and on the day following he gave a talk on the characteristics of his songs before a select audience at Jorasanko. At a meeting of the Visva-Bharati Sammelani he read out portions from his recently composed autobiography dealing with his early reminiscences. It is hoped that the book will be released before the Puja-season.

...  
Sir Maurice Gwyer and Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan have been delegated by the Oxford University to confer the doctorate of literature on Gurudeva. The function will take place at Santiniketan on August 7.  
...

Gurudeva has been deeply affected by the death of his nephew Surendranath Tagore, who was a Trustee of Visva-Bharati ever since its inception. At an interview with the press Gurudeva said: "Suren's greatness of mind and heart will never be known to many. His death is tragic because a noble life, so pure, so true, endowed with rarest gifts, lies unrevealed. I do not miss him only as a dearly loved relative but as a friend and companion whom it has been my privilege to know intimately and whose inspiration has helped me all these years in my work and writings."

...

Gurudeva has edited and drawn up a set of questions on books on various subjects prescribed by the Lokashiksha Samsad. They will be helpful to the students as indicating the specific requirement and scope of the Samsad examinations and will, besides, give them constructive suggestions as to the study of the subjects themselves. It is understood that these questions will be printed together and issued as a Visva-Bharati Bulletin at an early date.

...

Towards the last week of June a short training course was arranged on rural san-

itation at Sriniketan. Of the 14 Health Society doctors working under the auspices of the Visva-Bharati Health Co-operative Scheme 12 attended the course. Dr. J. B. Grant, Director of the All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, under the Rockefeller Foundation, presided over the inauguration and unveiled the portrait of the late Dr. Harry Garland Timbres.

Sukumar Chatterji, Deputy Sachiva, Sriniketan, in requesting Dr. Grant to preside over the function said a few words of welcome to Dr. Grant and the batch of students of his Institute who had accompanied him. In referring to the origin and growth of the Health Co-operative movement, he emphasized the indebtedness of Visva-Bharati to the late Kalimohan Ghosh, under whose direct inspiration the movement was started. He further indicated that the short course which was being started was intended to organise preventive measures and spread correct ideas about the laws of personal and collective hygiene among the rural population without which, he said, mere curative work was of little value. He concluded with the hope that those who joined the course would take full advantage of their training, which, he was sure, would result in a considerable improvement in the working of the Societies.

Unveiling the portrait of Dr. Harry Timbres, Dr. Grant gave a brief account of the life and activities of Dr. Timbres with special reference to his services at Sriniketan. At the close of his address Dr. Grant said: "The example of the man whom we are commemorating today is an inspiration to all who directly or indirectly came in contact with him and his career. His type die, but the spirit of such a man lives in order to encourage the few possessed of the creative urge which willy-nilly forces them to parti-

cipate and continue in the relay-race for the betterment of human social welfare."

...

Our best wishes go to Sj. Pramatha Nath Nandi, M. Sc., who served the Siksha-Bhavana as an Adhyapaka of Botany in a temporary capacity during the last academic session. Adhyapaka Punyamoy Sen who has been on study-leave for about 2 years rejoined his work in the beginning of this term. It is understood that during his leave of absence Sj. Sen carried on valuable research in plant physiology with Principal P. Parija, M. A. (Cantab.), I. E. S. of the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack.

...

Among the distinguished visitors who came during the vacation was Dr. Spencer D. Hatch of Martandum Rural Reconstruction Centre. He visited Santiniketan and Sriniketan on June 27. In the afternoon of the same day he met the workers at Sriniketan and told them about his experience in rural reconstruction work. In a recent letter to Sukumar Chatterji Dr. Hatch writes, 'I am enthused anew with what we can all accomplish together for Mother India, and to know the friends of Sriniketan — all members together of one great team.'

...

Our grateful thanks are due to Mrs. Bagchi, widow of the late Dr. S. C. Bagchi, Principal of the Calcutta University Law-College, for having presented 1000 books to our Library from her husband's collection along with necessary furniture and equipment. The books will be housed in a separate section.

...

( Continued on page 7 )

## Kalimohan Ghosh\*

Death took place of Kalimohan Ghosh at Santiniketan during the summer recess. For some months past he was suffering from high blood pressure to which he succumbed suddenly on May 13. In his death Visva-Bharati has lost a loyal worker whose active connection with the asrama dates back to the early days of the institution.

Though the field of his work was confined mainly to the district of Birbhum, yet Bengal knew him for one of those dedicated spirits who had devoted their energy and time unstintedly in the service of the country at large. As a young man he had given early proof of his patriotic fervour which had earned him a position amongst the leaders of young Bengal; his name was in the black books of the authorities, and a strict vigilance used to be kept over his movements by the police.

It was about this time, under peculiar circumstances, Gurudeva came to know Kalimohan babu. Those who are familiar with the trend of political movements in Bengal, immediately before the famous Pabna Conference, must know what the radicals of the day stood for, and Kalimohan babu was no less a radical than many. To some of his friends he had described how he became converted to an entirely new outlook of life by the convincing reasonableness of the memorable address delivered by Gurudeva at the conference. It was there that Gurudeva formulated, for the first time, his ideal of Rural Reconstruction, in which, he said, was hidden seeds of a greater and more potent revolution.

Though Rural Reconstruction occupies a prominent place in the Congress pro-

gramme today, there was a time when Gurudeva was openly ridiculed for what the so-called leaders termed 'the impossible project of a dreamy idealist'. Despite their attitude of mistrust and opposition, Gurudeva strove hard to give a practical shape to his plan of silent constructive work in the villages of Bengal. His own estate afforded a field for carrying out this valuable experiment, and now he called upon Kalimohanbabu to join him in the work.

Two factors helped him immensely in his attempt; one was unflinching faith in the truth of his doctrine and the other was the inspired help he secured from his youthful disciple. In many of his writings Gurudeva has repeatedly acknowledged his debt to Kalimohan babu. At one place he says, 'The responsibility of the work I took upon my own shoulders, in the teeth of opposition of the educated gentry, was rendered easy of fulfilment by the fact of having Kalimohan at my side. We spent many hours together discussing the possibilities of Rural Reconstruction. I found in him the makings of a true social worker and without him my task would have been rendered very difficult indeed. Kalimohan's physique at that time was ravaged by periods of acute indisposition. The more poorly was his health, the more his mind was filled with a burning enthusiasm for the cause we had espoused.'

While engaged in the work, Kalimohan babu's health suffered a complete breakdown and Gurudeva brought him over to Santiniketan for treatment. After he had recouped sufficiently, he joined the school as a teacher of the infant's class. About

\* Translated from the original Bengali of Sudhakanta Raichaudhuri by Kahitit Roy—Ed.

1912, Gurudeva sent him to England to gather knowledge and information of the various methods of primary education and adult literacy work. After spending the necessary period of training he returned to Santiniketan to rejoin his work at school. Before long, however, he was called upon to do his share of work in the wider field of Visva-Bharati. The Sriniketan centre of Rural Reconstruction had just been started, and Kalimohan babu stepped forward to take up the duty of service to the poor and lowly once again. Up till the last day of his life, he had carried out the mission to which he had dedicated himself in the days of his youth.

Kalimohan babu bore unflinching allegiance to Gurudeva and to Visva-Bharati. He deeply resented whenever he discovered in his colleagues the least sign of wavering from the unimpeachable ideals of the institution. On such occasions, he never hesitated to voice his unmistakable protest. In matters of principle, he was as exacting a taskmaster to his own self, as to his friends and co-workers. Problems like these, however, seldom stood in the way of his easy-flowing and natural friendly intercourse. While he was uncompromisingly strict on institutional matters, in private and social life he could be an intimate friend, always prepared to extend a helping hand to him who needed it. His conduct both in private and public life was one of warm comradeship and disarming courtesy.

Before he had joined Sriniketan, while yet a teacher at Santiniketan, I had the privilege of working with Kalimohan babu. Thin like a stick, it seemed he could be lifted off his feet by a random blast. On the other hand, he was very much like a match stick, easily ignited by anything he disapproved of, and as easily prone to cool down.

Nowhere was the warmth of his heart so easily perceptible as in his dealings with the villagers whom he served. In rural assemblies, he used to be a convincing advocate, because he talked what he felt. His speech was never so much verbiage. He was not one of those fashionable philanthropists whose mock familiarity with the 'country bumpkins' ended in the ballot-box. Kalimohan babu considered it his sacred duty to personally know the villagers, patiently listen to their grievances, discuss and argue with them, and then persuade them to accept the remedies he suggested. He treated them as his equals; and his instinctive respect for their views, and concern for their welfare, prevented him from imposing upon them ready-made solutions manufactured by the so-called reformists. He knew and he realised, in and through his work, that love was the most convincing of arguments. He brought to bear upon his task such sincerity and zeal that in his death this work of national importance has suffered a serious setback; the loss is as much to the country as to Visva-Bharati.

In recent months, on account of his suffering from high blood-pressure, Kalimohan babu was released from routine duties and was requested by Visva-Bharati to write a treatise on Rural Reconstruction, basing it on his long experience. His premature death prevented him from fulfilling that task. We know that in spite of his indisposition he could not check his wonted enthusiasm for work in the villages. Till recently, he used to regularly visit some of the village societies carrying on reconstruction work under the auspices of Visva-Bharati. A few hours before his death, he had taken part at a meeting of rural workers. He passed away in harness in the literal sense of the term.

That his infirmities prevented him from doing active service was Kalimohan babu's deepest grievance. He bore this mental depression gallantly, and never let anybody know how it undermined his health, and hastened the end.

His loss has been a severe blow to Gurudeva. A perusal of the letter Gurudeva wrote to Sriman Santideva Ghose, the eldest son of Kalimohan babu, bears evidence of the affection he had for his father. The following is an English rendering of the letter :

"I have been deeply hurt to learn that your father is no more. I had the occasion to know him intimately even before he came to Santiniketan. I found in him a kindred soul and a loyal

co-worker. His dedication to the asrama was complete. In various works of beneficence he has left his valuable contribution. His memory will ever remain enthroned in my mind and in the mind of the asrama. Death cannot take away the merit of his sacrifice, and time cannot dim the truth of his service for the poor. Let that fact console you in your irreparable loss."

Kalimohan babu has been snatched away from our midst at the premature age of 58. The last 30 years of his life he had devoted to his country's cause, under the direct inspiration of Gurudeva. It is impossible to express in words what a deep personal loss his death is to many of his friends and admirers. May his soul rest in peace.

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## In Memoriam

Amita Sen ( Khuku ) is no more. After protracted illness she was called to her heavenly rest on May 24 at her paternal home in Dacca.

Her death will be mourned by all of us in the asrama. Brought up as a student, first of the Pathabhavana and subsequently of the Sikshabhavana, she leaves behind her poignant memories long to be treasured by the inmates. Her charming personality, brilliant achievements, both academic and musical, and her long association with the asrama—all combine to make her loss an irreparable one. For about a year she was attached to the Sangitbhavana staff and during that time she did much to help her

department in its manifold activities. She was gifted with a most melodious voice which, combined with the long training she had under the late Dinendranath Tagore, made her one of the finest interpreters of Gurudeva's music. By her death Bengal has lost one of her most talented daughters.

She has ceased to be, her voice has forever merged into the profound calm of death, but her memory will linger long in our minds and long shall we mourn the abrupt end of a youthful life so rich in possibilities. Our heartfelt sympathies are with her family and with them we pray that her soul may rest in peace.

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## A Letter From Leonard Elmhirst

Dartington,  
May 19, 1940.

Dear Gurudev,

These are not easy times but I like to think of them as the birth pangs of a great age that is to be, the struggles of that chicken in the egg that you used to tell me about before the shell cracks open and a new world appears. Whether we shall be permitted to get a glimpse of that promised land or not I don't know.

We know that civil servants who lack imagination and who try to escape from the adult world by securing safe jobs, promotion and a pension are as capable of laying a dead hand upon everything they touch as the most hard hearted of capitalists. We also know that if a few more industrialists could see their task of making ever more wheels go round more smoothly as one of a great public service in which profit is only a measure of efficiency and not an end in itself, then we could harness their initiative and enterprise, their gamblers' courage to the honesty of an imaginative civil service and live.

Can we do it—and why do we need the periodic friction of war to generate the heat wherewith change is made?

This is where the new role of continuous and detached research seems to me to have its place, and I believe we shall come to a time when graduate research and training institutes will be attached to all great schools and explore all human activities and see that a process of orderly evolution and change takes the place of this tragic alternation between fear and stagnation on the one hand brute force and violent upheaval on the other.

Then and then only can the poet rhyme and the singer enjoy his singing.

It will come. America will grow up, China and India will find out all they have to contribute, Russia will mellow, Prussia—what will Prussia do? Burn herself out? Even Britain may find herself.

And here at Dartington the garden is as beautiful as when you first came here fourteen years ago, the sun is out—you won't believe me, the wind whispers among the new beech leaves, the red cows give Devonshire cream and the first strawberries are turning red.

"The chaffinch sings" and the "nine been rows" are sprouting, and you, I know, are still hunting for your Innisfree, and I hope still singing and painting and making horrible green stains on the carpet and looking forward to the mango season and perhaps an ice cream. Wasn't Mrs. Moody \* good at it? \*

You said I was "incurably romantic," so were you, Sir, and do you regret it—not for

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\* Mrs. William V. Moody—Gurudev's hostess in Chicago

a moment. Neither do I, and in our next incarnation, we'll be adventuring together again.

And Surendada†—how tenderly he treated me, how gently he nursed me on your house boat when my nerves were all unstrung, and with what calm assurance he gazed out on a world that had never treated him too well. His heart was with everything at Santiniketan and in everything you inspired. In the next incarnation I hope to visit Patisar with him on your houseboat.

The war does not simplify life but we are not afraid, even though we face as in 1066, 1588, and 1810 the realities of invasion.

Our best love to you and Pratima and Rathi.

Your affectionate  
Leonard.

† The late Surendranath Tagore

( Continued from page 2 )

Miss Marjorie Sykes will carry on the duties of Paridarshika of Sree-Bhavana till the new appointment is made.

...

The following students who have completed the course at Kala-Bhavana are now eligible for the Visva-Bharati Diploma: —

Nanda Keshav, Paresh Ch. Sinha, Shib Kumar Dutta, Sujit Roy and Mrs. Jyoti Sen.

...

Our two academic departments have secured excellent results in this year's University examinations. On the whole this year's record may compare favourably with that of the previous ones. With the exception of one all the students passed the B. A. examination, two of them, Kamala Kapur and Sukrit Mazumdar, with distinc-

tion. 27 appeared in the Intermediate Examination and 26 passed, with more than 50% placed in the first division. Devapriya Mukherjee of the I. Sc. Group stood high in the list with an asterisk and distinction in three subjects against his name. 12 appeared for the Matriculation Examination and 9 have come out successful, Kiriti Bakshi securing distinction in three subjects and Sujata Ghosh in one.

...

Reprints of Sukumar Chatterji's article on 'The Co-operative Health Societies Under The Visva-Bharati' which appeared in the May issue of the *Modern Review* may be obtained from the Sriniketan office. Visva-Bharati members interested in this may secure a copy of the same by sending nine pies only to cover the postage.

...



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume IX

AUGUST, 1940

Number II



Lino-cut—By Suhas Do

## Santiniketan & Sriniketan

Since his return from the hills Gurudeva has been taking an increasing share in the work of the asrama. Twice a week he is conducting a regular class for those Siksha-Bhavana students who have offered Bengali as their 'honours' subject. He is reading with them some of his own books prescribed by the University of Calcutta. The classes are being held at Chamelia where the one room upstairs is packed to capacity during lecture hours. Besides those for whom the classes have been arranged there are others—both students and members of the staff—who quietly filter in to take advantage of this opportunity.

...

Gurudeva presided over a meeting of the Sahityika—senior students' Bengali literary society held in front of Punascha on July 21. In his presidential remarks Gurudeva emphasised the necessity of drawing up programmes in such a way as to keep up the interest of the audience up till the very end of the meeting. He further said that a bewildering medley of songs and recitations, essays and stories could not properly fulfil the purpose of a literary society. His suggestion was that the Sahityika should from time to time arrange debates on important topics—literary and otherwise, so as to permit a stimulating exchange of thoughts and ideas on a particular question.

...

Gurudeva met the Siksha-Bhavana students at a delightful function arranged in the Dwarik compound on July 23. He was in excellent mood and the talk he addressed to the newly-admitted students was full of a

rare sense of humour. Following is a summary of the talk:

In the early days of the institution I had constant contact with the children of our school—you know they are delightful. They claimed much of my time and would drag me to their dormitories almost every evening to invent new parlour games for them.

I cannot tell you how much I regret my present inability to cultivate your stimulating company. Many of you are new-comers to this place. But I am sure you are no strangers to the spirit of the asrama. You must have already entered into the calm of the atmosphere here and the vitiated influence of the world outside will nevermore be able to contaminate your tender minds.

Your principal will perhaps want me to give you a word of advice. I shall do nothing of that sort. My only request is that you should regard this institution as your very own. There will be no room for super-imposed guidance if in your work and play you try to avoid all touch of vulgarity, and if by your beautiful and healthy conduct you bring out all those traits in your nature that are admirable.

No, I will not tender any advice; I would rather have you take me as one of your comrades. As an old man, old enough to be your grandfather, it should be my function to tell you stories and sing you songs and so make your life a little more enjoyable.

You have all my love and blessing. Some day some of you will grow as old as I am now, and then perhaps you will feel how I

( Continued on page 12. )

## Two Letters

Excerpts from the two letters we publish below, one from Gurudeva's friend in France, Madame Karpeles and the other from his American friend Mrs. A. R. Seymour are both profoundly moving. They show the silent anguish of sensitive hearts—face to face with the terrible calamity of war in Europe.—*Ed.*

We never know what appalling surprise we will have in opening our newspaper—and the amount of sufferings, of refugees, of diabolical invention is so huge that an ordinary human brain like mine cannot grasp it any more.

I turn towards our asrama in thought as towards a life-buoy,—and your letter of the 6th of March makes us feel in each line that we are in such harmony with your thoughts and feelings. We also echo Elmhirst's words: never have Santiniketan and Sriniketan appeared so precious, so eternal and so true as now. Blessed be Gurudeva who lighted that light house above the maddening storm.

A soldier wrote to us that our edition of *Fireflies* and other India books helped him to go through it all in giving his mind the rest and solace it needed. A school-mistress—unknown to us, wrote to us she would like to meet us and talk of Gurudeva as: 'Poet Tagore was her saviour in this dark age.' Another soldier we know: a refugee from Berlin ( Sanskrit professor, now in the French army ) asked me for cheap Bengali editions of Gurudeva's books—I have none and promised to ask you for a few.

( *From Madame Karpeles* )

"Every day is fearful—one is made heart-sick by the accounts of what innocent people are undergoing. One's incentive to persevere is the realization that in all countries exist men of good will who could make of man's world a friendly place for the human spirit. We all know such men. Our dear Mr. Andrews—are not his devotion and dedication promise of that happy time? All of our artistic impulses and yearnings point to that day and it comforts us to know that the treasures of the past are safeguarded against present destruction. Our good Dr. Kunz used to remark, 'Man is the only argument against God!'; I suppose this is not the first time in world history when man has seemed like one of nature's big mistakes. This morning the mocking bird assures me with his untiring song that he is one of the big successes of nature's artifice. These are the times when he sings all night long. Whenever one awakens in the night one hears that ceaseless melody, like a continuous fountain of song—silver bells and golden flutings, as if moon and stars had become vocal. If man were not a colossal egotist, he might recognize the sovereignty of mighty forests and infinitesimal songsters, and thus avoid the nightmares into which he plunges periodically. Our hearts go out to all people whose hearts inspire them to expect a crown in this beautiful, mysterious world, but who receive only chains.

( *From Mrs. Seymour* )

( Continued from page 10. )

felt not to be able to share your life. As it is I have to shut myself up within my shell ; my entourage, out of consideration for my declining age, have made me inaccessible. Though they are facile with their excuses, do not heed them, come to me whenever you feel like it—only do not rob me of my books.

“One more word and I shall ask your leave to go to my rest. In these days of party politics I would like to forewarn you against the modern habit of occupying opposition benches. Your teachers are your guides and well-wishers and you should be friendly to them. Run the institution on the basis of co-operation, not in the sphere of study alone but in other spheres as well.

...

Much to our surprise Gurudeva conducted the Wednesday service at the Mandir on July 24 and again on July 31. Owing to his failing health his visits to the Mandir have been mostly limited to rare and important occasions during the last few years.

In his discourse at the end of the prayer on July 24 Gurudeva explained to the newcomers the significance of the weekly *Upasana* saying, “In these days of spiritual nihilism the need is all the greater for contemplating the great truths preached by the sages of the Upanishads. No word is adequate to censure the modern spirit of mocking disrespect to those ancient traditions which we have tried to foster here in the asrama. Now, when the hand of cruel times lie heavy on the noblest endeavours of the soul, we shall do well to remember that it is the dwarfish mind that hurls itself against the eminence it cannot reach. We only prove our pathetic littleness by desecrating that which we should

emulate for the abundant and abiding good of humanity.”

He concluded by appealing to the congregation not to yield to the modern fashion of ridiculing what was sacred and said, “Before your tender and impressionable minds get hardened by the rude contact of circumstance, I would like you to realise the ideals I have been striving for during the last forty years. For their sake I have suffered much and put up with a great deal. All the time I have gone on hoping that some day some may partake of our sadhana with a receptive and reverent mind—freed from the stifling vulgarities of the age.”

...

The following is an English summary of Gurudeva's discourse given at the end of Wednesday prayers on July 31.

“Europe tried to realise the message of love and equality in political life alone and called it ‘democracy’, but no partial adoption of this great message can ever be permanent. It must embrace the whole life, political, social and spiritual. This is why it collapsed so soon in such a miserable way. Throughout the world to-day the worshippers of power are insulting humanity, ignorant of the fact that enslavement of man humiliates everyone.”

Explaining the distinctive feature of religion that emanated from India Gurudeva said: “The primitive man's life being precarious and threatened all the time with dark uncertainty and brutal competition most of the early religions conceived of a fearful Godhead. Elaborate rites and practices were prescribed to worship God mainly to appease his wrath. He was as though bribed to help the particular race in their struggle for existence. It was the sages of Ancient India who ever while leading an extremely difficult life declared that

'Anandam' or eternal bliss and joy was the perennial spring that vitalized creation from within. The divine light of joy and not the black darkness of fear was God's own message: Boldly they declared that those who conceive God as the Terror Incarnate and try to bribe him are like servile beasts harnessed to their narrow rituals and selfish social customs. Through love alone one man is united with another and humanity with God. Even Buddhism, a phase of India's spiritual expression, in the midst of its message of negation preaches 'Maitri' or world brotherhood and thus links itself up with India's own age-old message of humanity. We still fail to realise that negation of the right of freedom to one section of humanity, be it in politics or society, amounts to its negation to the whole of humanity. In striking down the free life of others one strikes at the root of his own freedom. The deliberate demoralisation that has taken place so long in India's political life has to-day made her absolutely incapable of rendering any effective help to humanity. By robbing India of her strength, her masters have invited disaster on themselves; recent history is evidence of that."

Concluding Gurudeva said, "Our guilt is no less. Have we not made outcasts of our own brethren? This pathetic condition is the outcome of stupid ignorance and deliberate flouting of the mighty messages of love and peace, preached by the Upanishads and Buddha. Forgetful of the noble traditions, we have fallen in line with the devil-worshippers whose deity is brute force alone. It is time that we should shake off the totem and taboo and no more behave as *animals of God*. We should reclaim from oblivious neglect our best heritage, for, will it not be tragic if instead of sharing it with the rest

of the world, we remain impervious to it ourselves?" ...

Santiniketan became linked by telephone with the rest of India on July 24 when Gurudeva inaugurated the trunk telephone connection by exchanging greetings with Sir G. V. Bewoor, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs.

Later Gurudeva proceeded to the Bolpur Telephone Exchange which he declared formally open at a meeting held in the premises. In this connection an interesting programme had previously been prepared by the All-India Radio. After the opening ceremony the programme was gone through with Gurudeva reciting one of his poems and some students of Saugit-Bhavana giving a few song-recitals.

...

Amongst visitors whom we had the pleasure of having with us during the month of July were Sri Annada Prosad Chowdhury, of the All-India Spinners' Association, Sri Yusuf Meherally, Mr. J. H. E. Cook, Postmaster-General, Bengal and Assam, Mr. J. K. Dey, Director of Telegraphs, Calcutta, and others.

...

A Manipuri Dancing teacher has been employed temporarily for three months to teach dancing to the boys of the Siksha-Satra and Siksha-Charcha.

...

We congratulate Dhirendramohan Sen, Superintendent of Education, Sriniketan, and Acting Assistant General Secretary, Visva-Bharati, on being appointed Technical Assistant to the Education Commissioner to

the Government of India. In various capacities Dhirendramohan has rendered invaluable service to our Institution ever since 1930 when he took charge of the department of Education at Sriniketan. Since then he has held the joint post of Principal and Rector for five years. He was for some time the Director of Sports and Director of the Visva-Bharati Samavaya Bhandar. In him loyalty to the ideals of the institution was combined with an admirable capacity, for efficient organisation. His genial personality and genuine feeling of comradeship will long be missed by his many friends and admirers here. An old boy of the asrama which he later on served so well, he carries our very best wishes in the new sphere of life which he had chosen for himself.

...

We would like to draw the notice of our readers to the appeal for a fund of five lakhs to erect a suitable memorial to the late C. F. Andrews. The appeal has recently been brought out in the form of a printed pamphlet addressed to the public. The General

Secretary, Visva-Bharati writes, "It is our special desire that no one should feel debarred from contributing because of the smallness of the gift he can make, for it is just such small gifts from the poorer of his friends which he would have specially valued. We believe that the form of the memorial which we are suggesting is in line with his own wishes ; during the last months he several times spoke of his desire to see a Hall of Christian Culture at Santiniketan as we have envisaged." All contributions will be gratefully received by Messers Bachraj & Co., Treasurer, Andrews Memorial Fund, Jehangir Wadia Building, 3rd Floor, Post Box 179, Fort-Bombay.

...

The following is the province-wise distribution of newly admitted students in the four academic departments at Santiniketan:—  
Bengal 58, U. P. 8, Punjab 6, Madras 6, Bombay 6, Sindh 5, Assam 4, Bihar 3, Orissa 3, C. P. 2, Hyderabad ( Deccan ) 2, Ceylon 2, Nepal 1, Total 106.

...



## In Memoriam

We regret to announce that Shyama Sharan Bhattacharya passed away peacefully on July 13 at the ripe age of 69 in his village home.

One of the earliest links of our asrama with its past has been snapped by his death. He was the oldest employee on our staff and had joined his work under the Santiniketan Trust towards the beginning of 1898. His fortytwo years' service and his clean, unostentatious way of living, endeared him to all of us in the asrama. He was a repository of many obsolete devotional songs composed by the Maharshi and Borodada and on especial occasions he used to sing them with a depth of feeling which recalled his long association with the two of our asrama's spiritual founders.

We convey our deepest condolence to his only son Bimal Bhattacharya— an employee in the Visva-Bharati General Office.

...

Shanta Chatterji, daughter of Mr. S. N. Chatterji, passed away after a brief illness at her paternal home in Batanagar in the evening of July 25. She was a student of the fourth group in the Patha-Bhavana and during the short course of her stay in the asrama she had endeared herself to everybody by her lively and attractive manners.

We offer our sincere sympathies to the family and pray that her soul may rest in peace.

...

## WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of July.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42' E.

Height above. M.S.L.-191ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto July 31.	No. of Rainy Days
July, 1939	29.480"	82.0°F	86%	6 M.P.H.	6 M.P.H.	9 M. P. H.	96°F	75°F	11.60"	2.44"	27.67"	17
July, 1940	29.532"	81.8°F	87%	6 M.P.H.	7 M.P.H.	15 M. P. H.	94°F	74°F	4.47"	0.80"	15.08"	28



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**Editor—Rathindranath Tagore.**

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume IX

SEPTEMBER, 1940

Number III

## Santiniketan & Sriniketan

The most outstanding event of the last month was the special convocation of the Oxford University which took place at Sinha-Sadan on August 7. On account of the present conditions in England the University decided to do the honour to Gurudeva in Santiniketan. Sir Maurice Gwyer and Sir S. Radhakrishnan, selected representatives of Oxford, made Gurudeva a Doctor of Literature (honoris causa), in recognition of his outstanding achievements in literature and art. Mr. Justice Henderson of the Calcutta High Court acted as the Public Orator and described Gurudeva's gifts and merits in sonorous Latin. Gurudeva made his acknowledgment in stately Sanskrit. The solemnity of the occasion was enhanced by the chanting of Vedic hymns, and the ceremonial and academic robes of both the members of the staff and the invited guests added to its impressiveness.

We include a special Convocation supplement in this issue of the *News*.

...

Gurudeva conducted the Wednesday Mandir service on August 7. In an inspiring discourse he described the blinding of collective human intellect as only a passing phase. "Humanity has yet to reach perfection",

said he, "submerged as we are in the darkness of Untruth. Civilisation is still in the making and the process of evolution has perhaps just begun. In the barren wastes of human endeavour we come across solitary figures who have been able to lift up their heads above the common mass, above the squalor which has hardened into a crust of sin and ugliness. From time to time noble souls have attempted with the utmost zeal to dispel darkness in the light of Truth and so lead humanity to a newer fulfilment. The Buddhas and the Christs, exceptions though they are, point out to succeeding generations how best to transcend petty limitations. Their inspiring examples hold out hope for a better future which we should look up to if only to see beyond the ordeals with which we are faced to-day."

...

All the departments of Visva-Bharati remained closed on the occasion of the annual *Halakarsan* ceremony which was held at Sriniketan on Aug. 31. The function began with a procession which terminated at the Mela Ground tastefully decorated for the function. After the chanting of propitious Vedic hymns, Rathindranath Tagore, requested Pandit Kshitimohan Sen to conduct the

ceremony. Gurudeva could not participate in the function owing to slight indisposition.

In his address Pandit Kshitimohan Sen explained to the audience the significance of the occasion. "It is our incumbent duty", he said, "to remind ourselves from time to time the great debt we owe to Mother Earth. To-day when drought stares us in the face, we should specially remember how she had, out of the granary of her abundant love, sustained millions of her children since the beginning of civilisation." Pandit Kshitimohan then referred to the conflict being waged between brother and brother and traced its source to the steady breaking away of humanity from the lap of the soil. In this connection he read out a Sanskrit hymn which, he said, was composed more than three thousand years ago. "The hymn calls the children of the soil to return to the lap of the kind Mother. Though centuries had passed and changing vicissitudes affected humanity for good or ill, the truth of the message uttered by our forefathers holds good upto this day. If instead of renewing and refreshing our vital contact with the soil we move farther away from her nothing can then save us from the doom of a rootless existence."

Among those present there was a number of villagers from the surrounding villages.

...

Under the auspices of the Hindi-Samaj the death-anniversary of the poet Tulsidas was observed at a largely attended meeting in Uttarayan. The programme commenced with a song from Tulsidas and included several recitations from his writings and critical appreciations.

In spite of an unusually busy day and consequent exhaustion Gurudeva attended the function and spoke a few words on the

distinctive greatness of Tulsidas's poetry. "Tulsidas touched the familiar story of Valmiki," Gurudeva said, "and transmuted it into a fresh creation of beauty which has remained a perennial source of inspiration. Poets like Tulsidas are a rare phenomenon. They sway the collective emotions of a whole race and age, irrespective of their intellectual equipment. I have always admired him as a poet who has attained an undisputed seat in millions and millions of hearts."

...

We were fortunate in having with us Dr. Hadi Hasan, eminent scholar and professor of Persian Literature. Dr. Hasan delivered a course of three extension-lectures on Muslim contributions to Learning and Culture, Hindu contributions to Learning and Culture, and the Poetry of Sherwan. All the lectures were greatly appreciated. Gurudeva hopes and we also, that Dr. Hasan will repeat his visits in the near future.

...

Our grateful thanks are due to Mr. S. N. Mazumdar, I. C. S., who has kindly consented to award a monthly scholarship of Rs. 10 for a poor but deserving student of the Siksha-Bhavana department. The Principal has allotted the scholarship to Samarash Mazumdar, of the first-year, I. Sc. class. In this connection mention may be made of the gift of a scholarship to the said department made by Dr. Satyaban Roy—one of our Life-Members.

...

An exhibition of the recent paintings and sketches by M. Ju Peon together with a number of Indian paintings—both ancient and modern—was held in the Kala-Bhavana Museum for a fortnight from August 7. Among the exhibits there were about 30

## Moral Re-Armament

The Rise of a New Spirit.

Mr. Roger Hicks

~~By Rt. Rev. Foss Westcott, Metropolitan Bishop of India.~~

The West has lost its way. Ever since the last war we have been putting our trust in cures that were no cures and in hopes that have proved dupes. We have justified Bernard Shaw's reply when he was asked if the other planets were inhabited. He said that he did not know, but that if they were they must be using this one as a madhouse. The sorry spectacle of surplus and want, of overwork and unemployment, of strikes and lock-outs, of the haves and the have-nots, is only too familiar. We have failed to get to the root of the problem. Science has given us control over more deadly weapons with which to kill each other but has not shown us how to have control over ourselves. Education has taught us much about life but not how to live; Germany and England are two of the most "educated" countries in the world to-day. We have tried Disarmament Conferences, but failed to disarm men's passions; we have tried Economic Conferences and a League of Nations, where selfish nations have sat round a table hoping for an unselfish plan to emerge, but all waiting for someone else to begin.

Moral Re-Armament shows another way. At the Disarmament Conference in Washington in 1921 Dr. Frank Buchman saw being sown the same seeds of greed and hate that had led to the Great War of 1914-18. He saw that national and world problems remain the same because the root problem—human nature—remains unsolved. Until we deal with human nature thoroughly and drastically on a national scale, nations must still follow their historic road to violence and destruction. The conviction came that what was needed was God-guided personalities to make God-guided nationalities to make a new world. World-changing through life-changing—this is the aim of the Moral Re-Armament movement: to create a new social order under the control of the spirit of God, making for better human relationships, for unselfish co operation, for cleaner business, cleaner politics, for the elimination of political, industrial and racial antagonisms. "Peace", said Dr. Buchman, "is not just an idea. It is people becoming different." These words both point out the folly of the past and chart a course for the peacemakers of the future.

Men and women of all races, creeds and classes who have experienced the power of God to transform and direct their own lives have been drawn together to work for social and economic revolution. In June 1938 a world-wide call to Moral Re-Armament was issued. It was taken up and sponsored by leaders in many lands. Evidence of the world-wide response has come from all sides. Wherever the challenge of Moral Re-Armament has been accepted and applied stories are told of changed lives, changed homes, changed relationships, changed situations, in fact, the beginnings of a new order. The Head-hunter no longer hunts for heads, the labour leader and the capitalist co-operate, politics become less tortuous and in the fierce battleground of civic administration implacable enemies have

been reconciled to the great advantage of the citizens. Five hundred and fifty Mayors and civic leaders from all over Britain recently issued this call to their citizens :—

To-day when the whole world is threatened with ruin, we feel more urgently than ever before the need for that new force of Moral Re-Armament which can create a new world, a new world of sanity and order, a world of plenty and peace.

We cannot live for ever from one crisis to another, from one war to the next. We seek a hate-free, fear-free, greed-free world, where every nation can enrich the common life of all, where every man has his work to do. This, not recurring crises and destruction, is the God-given destiny of mankind. Amid the failure of human wisdom, there is still one Supreme Source from Whom all can draw new power, new hope, new illumination. God speaks directly to the heart of every man and woman who is prepared to listen and obey. . . .

All over Britain, Civic Authorities are summoning their fellow-citizens to share with them in this world-wide plan of listening to God. We call on you to play your full part in this highest form of national service. May our community be in the vanguard of this advance, to lead the world on to sanity and peace.

From artists and writers, from doctors and educationalists come stories of new-found power and creative ability. Here is what the foremost artists and writers of Britain say :—

The question therefore confronts every artist "Am I contributing to the spiritual rebirth of my country?" To challenge men to an awareness of individual responsibility on the basis of absolute honesty, unselfishness, love and purity—this is the great need of the day : this is Moral Re-Armament. In this task the artist as citizen has a splendid duty to perform. His urgent expression of the underlying spiritual aspiration of the hour will lift his art to new heights. Out of personal dedication to God, out of mighty sacrifice and creative living, will come the spiritual and cultural renaissance that will save civilisation.

The leading physicians write :—

Science has made great advances, but without corresponding moral progress we risk losing even the benefits already achieved. Behind much disease, as behind world unrest, are fear, self-indulgence, jealousy and resentment. These are problems for which Medicine might provide a radical solution.

It is still our privilege to enjoy unrivalled contact with the homes and people of the nation. Our immediate task is to teach men that health is not the mere absence of disease but includes a moral and spiritual foundation for life and the replacing of conflict and apathy with a purpose that claims the whole personality in the service of our fellows. A growing body of people in many countries is calling for this "moral rearmament" to provide the discipline and the direction needed by both individual and nation. Our profession can give a lead to such a programme which is in accord with the highest ideals of our tradition. To achieve it we realize that the highest standards of honesty and unselfishness must be the touch-stone of our professional and private lives. Only through insistence on these spiritual values will the resources of science be liberated and a new world built on which men can attain to their inherited capacity for physical, moral and spiritual development.

The war has but increased the urgent need for this new spirit, for the problems of war-time are those of peace-time, but on a larger scale. The treachery and self-seeking that have undermined whole nations from within are but the greed, the apathy, the indiscipline, the irresponsibility of us all writ large. Fear and panic have come, as they always must come, to those whose interest and security depend on material comforts. How different is the result when men and women trust God and follow His daily direction ! Numerous stories show how in this spirit war-time problems of evacuation, profiteering and separated families are being tackled. . . Instead of fear and despair there is a peace of heart and mind that permits of constructive planning that nothing can defeat, where every

difficulty is used to deepen one's trust in God and to build up that character upon which the freedom and the strength of individuals and nations truly depend.

Here is the challenge that leading women of Britain have issued to the women of the country, a challenge that has been taken up in every district :—

We believe that the women of Britain have a special responsibility in applying this spirit of Moral Re-Armament to the daily life of the country. As an immediate step we need to make the best use of money and materials. Knowing that seventy per cent of the nation's shopping is done by women we can begin by accepting the responsibility that lies on our side of the counter. We therefore determine :—

1. To carry out the spirit as well as the letter of regulations with regard to buying.
2. To consider the needs of others and refrain from selfish hoarding.
3. To make frank enquiries if we are puzzled by a rise in price, instead of suspecting profiteering and gossiping about it.
4. To co-operate with our tradespeople by paying bills promptly.
5. To recognise difficulties caused by shortage of staff ; to wait patiently for our turn and choose quickly when it comes.
6. To take a pride in thrift ; to remember that many of our daily necessities are brought from overseas at the peril of men's lives, and to see that nothing is wasted or carelessly used.

In this spirit we can fight to conquer the fear, greed and selfishness which are the ultimate causes of war itself. Such a spirit cannot be rationed. It is as vital a need as our daily bread, if we are to build up a world where we and our children can rejoice in the freedom and fulness of life.

This new spirit, the spirit of Moral Re-Armament is fast growing in Britain. Wherever it has been applied it has brought unity and creative planning. How speedily would the problems of this country be solved by the application of this spirit ! If only England would apply it in all her relations with India ! Racial "superiority", economic greed and a thirst for power cannot exist with Moral Re-Armament. How speedily, too, would communal and economic difficulties be settled by the rise of this new spirit. There is enough for everybody's need but not for everybody's greed. Imagine a wave of constructive unselfishness throughout the land ! Already there are forces on the move to spread this spirit throughout India. Like light and air it is available for all ; for inner strength is not a privilege for the few but a necessity for us all.

To-day we face a threatening present and an unknown future. Great changes have taken place ; more and greater are to be expected. The guidance of God is like a search-light beam which pierces the darkness and points the way to a new and better world. It results in that radical change in human nature which must come if there is to be any permanent cure to recurrent crisis.

In the creative mind of God there are inexhaustible resources of power and illumination, as yet untapped and unexplored. They are available for all who are willing to listen and obey. To neglect them is to cut a life-line of the nation. Millions need to re-establish contact with that Supreme Source of strength and wisdom, for the world of to-morrow *must* be God-controlled. His plan alone is adequate. To work for this is the aim of Moral Re-Armament. The alternatives are chaos and a God-controlled world. Each has its roots in the life of the individual ; the choice is therefore first of all a personal choice—an enlistment on the side of national decay, or national rebirth. In the words of Dr. Buchman:—

We need a re-dedication of our people to those elementary virtues of honesty, unselfishness and love.

We must have the will again to find what unites people rather than what divides them. It must become the dawn of a new era, a new age, a new civilization.

By a miracle of science men can speak by radio to millions. By a miracle of the spirit God can speak to every man. His voice can be heard in every home, every business, every government. When man listens, God speaks. When man obeys, God acts. It does not matter who you are or where you are. Accurate, adequate information can come from the mind of God to the minds of men who are willing to take their orders from Him. This is the revolution which will change human nature and re-make men and nations.

People believe that their leaders should be guided by God. But the rank and file must be guided too. A God-guided public opinion is the strength of the leaders. This is the dictatorship of the living spirit of God, which gives every man the inner discipline he needs and the inner liberty he desires. This is true democracy.

Our security, the world's security, lies in God-control. No other social, political, or economic programme goes to the root of the disease in human nature. Only God-controlled men will make God-controlled nations to make a new world. In this adventure every man can find his vocation, every nation its destiny.

(Continued from page 18)

paintings and 40 sketches by M. Peon mostly dealing with his studies of the Himalayas.

...

We announce with great pleasure that the Calcutta University authorities have kindly sanctioned an examination centre at Santiniketan for the Matriculation, I. A., I. Sc., and B. A. examinations to be held in ensuing year.

...

On August 20 the Kala-Bhavana and Sangit-Bhavana students gave a performance of *Garba* and *Ras* dances in front of the grounds of Saptarni. Gurudeva was present.

The Museum has received as a gift from Gurudeva 18 of his recent paintings.

...

A party of prominent Bengal Congressmen including Sri Surendra Mohan Ghose, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, arrived here on August 19. They had an interview with Gurudeva on the following day. In a long discussion Gurudeva regretted the fact that workers in the political field, preoccupied as they were with the immediate objective of seizing political

power, were liable to forget that cultural uplift was a condition precedent in bringing about an all-pervasive and revolutionary change in India. He further remarked that at the present moment the need was all the greater for steady constructive work which should prevent the tragic disintegration of India's culture.

Srijut Ghose left the following message before his departure: "Though we are primarily engaged in a struggle for the independence of our country, we look upon Visva-Bharati as the field of our future work, which, if we do not live to undertake, those who will come after us will do. Success in our efforts in the political field will necessarily lead to the fulfilment of the Poet's ideal—represented in this institution; or else, our effort will have been meaningless and our success futile. The poet during the interview regretted that our people of Bengal did not appreciate the cultural contribution of Visva-Bharati. That is perhaps true to a certain extent. But in our opinion, if the Loka-Siksha scheme could be worked out into general practice, Visva-Bharati will become linked up with the homes of our people in distant villages and its good work appreciated by those very persons who represent true

India. In these days, when provinces are getting steadily apart from one another for lack of cultural and other contacts, we are filled with hope to see in this institution an earnest of a culture on an All-India basis."

The Loka-Siksha Samsad conducted this year Adya and Provesika examinations at different centres in Bengal and outside. The response from the public has been more pronounced than what it has been last year. The number of candidates considerably increased and included several girls. The examinations commenced on April 18 and were conducted under the supervision of responsible persons of the localities concerned, for whose generous co-operation we would like to acknowledge our grateful thanks. This year's examination results have been fairly satisfactory. Of the eleven candidates who sat for the Adya examination one passed in the first class, and the rest in the second. They are now eligible for the Diploma of Adya-Bharati of the Samsad. 17 candidates appeared in the Provesika examination and out of them 12 passed, 3 in the first division and 9 in the second. Successful candidates will be awarded certificates. Results of both the examinations are given below :

#### Adya Examination :

Name of the Candidate	Result
Rajendra Kumar Mitra	II
Ramrenu Mukherjee	I
Ramananda Roy	II

Name of the Candidate	Result
Harinarayan Banerjee	II
Dhirendra K. Sarkar	II
Ramesh Ch. Biswas	II
Abanija Nath Chatterjee	II
Gaurpada Sarkar	II
Jatadhari Roy	II
Upendra Nath Chakravarty	II
Quazi Golam Mohabub	II
Ramcharan Kar	passed in Arithmetic only.

#### Provesika Examination :

Name of the candidate	Result
Murali Mohon Das	II
Alok K. Banerjee	X
Sushil K. Banerjee	II
Sushil K. Mukherjee	absent
Probodh K. Banerjee	II
Asok K. Banerjee	II
Dhirendra K. Nath	X
Kalipada Nath	II
Upendra N. Nath	II
Saileshwar Chatterjee	absent
Sukumari Devi	X
Abha Rani Chowdhuri	II
Tara Rani Acharya	X
Protiva Rani Pal	X
Amarendranath Kumar	I
Phani Bhusan Guin	I
Padmalochan Mukherjee	absent
Santosh Kumar Das	II
Anil Kumar Basu	I
Usha Rani Dey	II

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Aug., 1940	29°680"	82°2°F	88%	5 M.P.H.	6 M.P.H.	11 M. P. H.	98°F	76°F	14'08"	2'68"	29'11"	25



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## Santiniketan & Sriniketan

Of late Gurudeva has not been keeping good health. On the advice of his doctors, he left for Calcutta on September 17. While in Calcutta, Dr. Sir Nilratan Sarkar and Dr. B. C. Roy examined Gurudeva thoroughly and issued the following statement : "The poet came to Calcutta two days ago to have himself examined as he has been of late feeling a general weakness coming over him. We examined the poet with great care, and we are strongly of opinion that if his life is to be spared for some more years to come, it is essential to secure for him complete rest and to save him from all varieties of excitement and worries caused by external agencies. We have asked him to avoid any such sources of excitement because his sensitive mind reacts strongly to any form of external stimuli.

"We are, however, of the opinion that without the willing co-operation of the public it is not possible for the poet to obtain this rest. It is well-known that people resort to him for advice, sympathy, co-operation and guidance in matters concerning public welfare. But they do not know that any approach of this character causes a great deal of excitement in his mind. We therefore appeal to the public to do nothing which will interfere with his rest, because nothing could be dearer to his well-wishers than his continued wellbeing ; no one will be so inconsiderate as to grudge him the rest and peace which

he needs now, in order that he might follow his own favourite pursuits in life."

Gurudeva left for Kalimpong on September 19 for a change of climate.

...

The seventieth birthday anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was observed here on September 30. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen presided on the occasion. In his presidential address Pandit Kshitimohan said,—

"My association with Gandhiji and my studies of the medieval saints of India convinced me long ago that the Mahatma belonged to that long line of seekers of truth who have walked through the pages of the cultural and spiritual history of this ancient land of ours. That Gandhiji is a politician is an accident ; his true personality is that of a *Tapas*—a seeker. His emphasis is on the inner spirit, be it in personal conduct or in national life. Herein lies his greatness, and it is here that he baffles the mere politician. Non-violence as a precept is age-old, but what is born anew is his living faith in it, in which he is steeped in all aspects of his life and activities.

"To us of the asrama here, Gandhiji's life carries a special significance. For, it has been the aim of our asrama to build up a nucleus of life as Gurudeva has visualised for our country and which Mahatmaji has expressed as a national ideal".

Marjorie Sykes who was the principal speaker at the meeting said,—

"The first true impression I had of Gandhiji was that he stood for freedom. The freedom for which he stood and still stands is the very antithesis of licence ; he believes that in personal and national life no less than in the artistic and athletic worlds, true living freedom is the fruit of discipline and self-control.

"The impression that I received when I first saw him is one that has deepened with each succeeding meeting—one of burning and piercing sincerity that tolerates no false sentiments or flattery. The test of our love of India is what service we are prepared to give and what self-discipline in endurance and understanding we are prepared to undertake. The high national ideals of Santiniketan make his challenge to us here a very real one. It is one that we should face up to, both in practical service and simplicity and in the thinking out of the principles of non-violence which are perhaps Gandhiji's greatest contribution not only to India but to the world".

Upendra Das, the next speaker, referred to Mahatmaji's deep respect for humanity which, he said, permeated his views on life in general and politics in particular. "His doctrine of non-violence," said the speaker, "of Harijan uplift and freedom of thought, speech and action becomes understandable if only we thoroughly appreciate Gandhiji's abounding love for all that true humanity stands for. A single generation may not be able to adequately realise those aspirations that are nearest to Gandhiji's heart, but if he succeeds in leading humanity even a step further than where it now stands, he will have achieved something worthy and noble."

...

A Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition held in Sinha Sadan and Kala-Bhavana was opened by Sri Nityananda Kanungo, a former Congress Minister of Orissa, on September 24. The exhibition was held under the auspices of Visva-Bharati with the aid of the All-India Spinners' Association. The Exhibition remained open for three days. Notable among the exhibits were the artistic silk-textiles from Orissa, fine Khadi from Andhra, silk shirtings and sarees from Murshidabad, Khadi prints from Bombay and U. P., Kokti cloth from Behar, and Endi and Muga from Assam. The Sriniketan stall with its collection of village crafts, artistic pottery, leather and *batik* work attracted a good deal of attention. The rich collection of textiles in Kala-Bhavana, including some beautiful specimens from distant China and Java, was a revelation to most of us of the Asrama. During the three days, demonstrations of fine spinning up to 200 counts were given by Srimati Urmila Ghosh of Khulna. It is understood that goods worth about Rs. 1600/- were sold. On September 25 an informal discussion on the economics of Khadi took place in the Hall of Cheena-Bhavana with Sri Nityananda Kanungo, Sri Annada Prasad Choudhury and Mr. S. N. Mozumdar, I C. S., participating.

On the occasion of the opening of the exhibition the following telegraphic message was received from Mahatma Gandhi :—"My faith in Khadi is ever growing. I am glad Santiniketan is having a Khadi exhibition. I wish it success." Dr. Rajendra Prasad who was to have opened the exhibition sent the following telegram: "Sorry, still too weak to undertake journey. Wish exhibition success with Gurudeva's blessings." The following message was sent by Gurudeva from Kalimpong:

( Continued on page 80 )

## The Livery of Freedom\*

If there is one institution in our country where All-India is represented it is here in Santiniketan. What our great organisation, the Congress, represents in the political sphere, Santiniketan does in the world of education and culture. Here, "the world is not broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls". Creed, caste, class, even nationality and race do not create artificial barriers. The fragments, diverse in appearance, coalesce naturally in their inherent unity to form the whole, a smaller India as it were, a fore-runner of India to be, a mighty nation. Let not the word nation frighten some of you who may have already imbibed the advanced thought of internationalism without nationalism. The two are not antagonistic. India of old had never in her history fallen from the heights of humanity. She never will. Even today it is preaching humanity through her great leader Mahatma Gandhi, when powerful nations, it seems, are out to claim once again and preserve the doctrine of the chosen people, their superiority, their right to dominate others. And what better evidence do you seek of our high aim of upholding humanity even while we struggle to consolidate ourselves into a nation than the great ideal that this institution of Visva-Bharati has set for itself and expressed in simple yet noble language of our Gurudeva.—"To study the Mind of Man in its realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view." It is here that the appeal of Santiniketan lies. It is immaterial whether or not you have succeeded in achieving the object of the Visva-Bharati, so long as there is honest, sincere striving to attain the ideal. It is the striving that counts, for, if we are true in our strivings the goal will be reached.

You, boys and girls, young men and young women are gathered here from all parts of India, leading a corporate life, in work, in play, in the trifling incidents of a day to day life, in surroundings so harmonious with nature, so close to the soil to which the bases of our civilisation are rooted. You are also thrice blessed, for you have the great fortune of living under the benign shade cast by the mighty mind and the noble soul of our Gurudeva. To you we look forward to establishing the basic principles of unity in diversity. You will sow when you return home and into the minds of those who come into contact with you what you imbibe here, consciously and unconsciously, in the natural process of living in this atmosphere, that breadth of mind and outlook that passes by the differences of one's faith, language, ways, habits, inevitable in a country of such vast dimensions and sees and recognises the greater elements that lie buried below the surface making unerringly for unity when properly nurtured. You will thus actively regenerate a united nation. To you especially I shall speak today in the language of an elder brother. Not as a censorious elder brother of old, but of the modern type, i.e. as a comrade with slightly greater experience of life. And on this occasion Khadi must be our topic.

Why does Congress insist on Khadi? Why do so many of our great men advocate khadi? Leave out Gandhiji; intellectuals like Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal, Rajgopal-achariar and Rajendra Prasad, men of action like Sardar Patel, Subhas Bose and Khan Abdul Gaffer Khan, aristocrats and commoners, socialists, communists, Hindus, Moslems,

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\*Sri Nityananda Kanungo's speech given during the opening of the Khadi Exhibition.—Ed.

Parsis and even those foreigners who are our friends, all wear khadi, all unite in advocating khadi. Our Gurudeva here, Acharya Nandalal Bose, your two youthful comrades who guide the school and college, that loved teacher of yours with grey hairs belying his youthful spirit from distant Sind, all wear khadi. Why? There must be some reason behind it. Why do all men, whom we honour and respect most, all over the country wear khadi, speak for khadi, advocate khadi? I shall leave out the philosophy and ethics of charka, and tell you of those aspects which will, I hope, appeal to you as they had appealed and still appeal to me.

You know of the grinding poverty of our people. You pay Rs. 25/- a month for your schooling, board and lodging here. There are not many schools with such low charges. Yet how many of our people can send their boys and girls to this delightful school of yours for education? Try to figure out amongst your friends, relations and neighbours. Look round yourself here. Think of the men in the villages where you go round for picnics. How many of these men can afford this small expenditure to give a fitting education to their boys and girls? Very few indeed. Now take another step and look round again. The food you eat here, is by no means rich. Yet, how many get even this food? The next time you go to a village see for yourself and I feel sure you will find many families where a meal of such food will be considered a feast for a gala day. Look around more closely, you will surely find men women and children who cannot get a square meal a day. There are people in our country so destitute that they consider rice a delicacy. Men versed in the science of dietics talk of a balanced diet. It sounds a mockery when millions are perpetually half-starved. Is it not worthwhile to find a means of employment whereby one could add a little, however small the amount may be, to the income? A person can earn As. /3/- a day by spinning 8 hours. Spinning is an art easily mastered by man, woman or child. If between the members working in their spare time a family earn an additional -/3/- a day what a princely sum they will have to supplement their other sources of income! I have called -/3/- a princely sum, and truly it is so to millions of our countrymen. Or, if they so wish they can spin enough yarn to make for themselves the clothes they need and more. I have a friend whom some of you know. No busier man than him do I know. He is the man on whom the entire organisation of the All India Spinners' Association of 3 provinces, Assam, Bengal and Orissa rests. Yet he finds time to spin all the yarn he needs for clothing himself. So, time to spare we all have. But you need not spin yourself if you have no faith in it. Only if you will wear khadi you will be creating a larger demand for it and thus provide a larger income to lakhs of our semi-starved countrymen. Judge for yourself from the figures of the All India Spinners' Association. In 1939 this association gave employment to nearly 3 lakhs of spinners and 19,000 weavers. The spinners earned over 21 lakhs of rupees and the weavers nearly 12 lakhs. See for yourself the possibilities of hand spinning of khadi. Every yard of khadi worn by you means perhaps two more morsels of food to the hungry mouth. When you eat your food think of the millions that are starving around you. You will then, I make bold to say, wear khadi.

People say, why not give employment to the unemployed by other means. Certainly let us do so, and attempts are being made in other directions. But khadi is also one of the means, and a proved means. Why should we discard it till something more suitable is not

discovered ? See the advantages of this industry of hand-spinning. Men and women of all ages can ply it—from a septuagenarian to a child of five. One has not to leave one's home to find employment. The implements one needs are not only simple but so inexpensive. As you will soon find when you go round the exhibition, there is not a part in the implements that cannot be made in the village. So repairs and replacements do not create a problem. It gives employment to lakhs of weavers who are engaged in an industry only next in importance and size to agriculture in our country. All the textile mills taken together in our country, meeting 65 per cent of our demand in cloth, employ a little over 4 lakhs of men. Hand-spinning and weaving will easily any day give employment to ten times that number and more. May be that the individual income therefrom will be small, but would you support a state of affairs where two eat four sumptuous meals a day and eight starve, and object to all the ten having two meals a day ? Of course our aim is that all the ten should feed sumptuously all the 4 meals a day. But till we attain that stage we want the semi-starved to eat at least one meal a day and to that end, it is no denying the fact, khadi helps on a scale no other industry does at the present day.

Of course, khadi is expensive. Because we insist on paying a living wage to the spinner. Is that a crime ? There should be a basic standard of wages for all trades and industries. This should be so fixed as to give the worker sufficient food, clothing and his other necessary requirements. And in fixing the price of any commodity it is the basic wage that must rule it and not what the market would take. This is no new principle. Exploitation of workers must cease.

That khadi can be as fine of texture and as beautiful in design as any other textile, you will very soon see. The appeal of hand-made goods lies in its variety, absence of that monotonous repetition so characteristic of products of large scale mechanisation. It is here that individual taste, individual skill come into play and life thus acquires a richness at once attractive and educative. Hand-spun and handwoven textile is prized in all countries the world over. So are other home made products like bread, jams, confectioneries, condiments. Remember that the Dacca muslin, once the pride of India, was khadi. Have we lost the skill to produce it ? No.

Uniformity of apparel has an unifying effect on the human mind. Hence the uniforms of fighting forces where unity in action is the essential basis of success. Khadi is our uniform. This is what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has stressed so beautifully in his recent message—"Buckle your armour of khadi. Get ready for the voyage, for the distant shore beckons. With stout hearts and strong arms, and with this *Livery of Freedom* we shall cross the stormy seas and reach the haven of our desire."

There is no one amongst you who does not seek freedom for our country. Then wear khadi. As you go in and see for yourselves the beautiful fabrics woven by the labour of so many of your brothers and sisters, remember those have provided a little food to a number of half-starved men, women and children. Remember these are home-made products. Remember that all the men and women whom we hold in respect and whom we honour wear khadi and want us to wear khadi. Remember that khadi is our *Livery of Freedom*.

I am conscious of the honour you have done me today. I declare the exhibition open.

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(Continued from page 26 )

"I greatly rejoice at this auspicious event of the opening of the Weaving and Cottage Industries' Exhibition in Santiniketan asrama. It is my great regret that my ill health compels me to be absent on this occasion, when our efforts and aspirations of past years are going to be revealed in a mature form. However, from this distance the vision comes clear to me that this Exhibition has made its appearance as an historical event, carrying the indication of a far-spreading future of fruitfulness for our country, and with all my heart I wish it an unobstructed success."

An English translation of the text of Sri Kanungo's inauguration speech will be found in this issue of the News.

The Varsa-Mangal Festival was held this year on September 4. In the morning there was a delightful ceremony in front of the Hindi-Bhavana, and in the evening song and dance recitals were given in front of the Library verandah. Gurudeva was present on both occasions.

The ancient seasonal festival of Indra-Utsav was celebrated at Bandgora along with Briksharopan. The Briksharopan ceremony was also performed at Sitalpur and Raghunathpur—rural reconstruction centres under the auspices of Sriniketan.

An exhibition of paintings, linocuts, and plaster-models of the students of Kala-Bhavana executed during the current term was held in the Museum from September 12 to September 20.

We extend our cordial welcome to the following members of the staff who joined their respective duties last month :—Jyotirmoy Nandi, B. Sc., Adhyapaka of Science, Patha-Bhavana, Sakti K. Chakra-

varti, Instructor of Lathi and Dagger-play, and Anil K. Choudhury, B. A., I. D. D. (Bangalore) Manager, Sriniketan Dairy.

Rural reconstruction work was started in a part of Surul village in the month of September. A health society has been organised at Supur village in order to help in the work of rural hygiene and a qualified doctor has been placed in charge of it. The society has received a grant of Rs. 200/- from the Manager, Kumar Panchanan Ward Estate.

Our hearty congratulations to Binoy Gopal Roy, Adhyapaka, Siksha-Bhavana, on his winning the Griffith Memorial Prize of the Calcutta University for the year 1939. He submitted a thesis on An Aspect of British Neo-Hegelianism.

It is gratifying to know that this year we have been able to retain the same standard of excellence in games and sports as in the preceding ones. Altogether 9 soccer-matches were played with visiting teams. The results were as follows:

	Goals For	Goals Against
Y. M. C. A. Students Hostel	2	0
Bhagalpur College	0	1
Chandanagar Duplex College	3	0
Bogra College	7	0
Ashutosh College	0	0
Hooghly College	2	0
Ripon College	1	0
St. Xavier's College	2	2
Bangabasi College	0	1

In the annual Suhrid Cup Competition the first group won the trophy defeating the third group by 4 goals to nil. The Sishu Cup was annexed by the fifth group team who defeated the sixth group by a solitary goal. The girls of Sree-Bhavana won their laurels in the two basket-ball matches they played with the two visiting teams—the Isabella Thoburn College, Lucknow, and the Rajghat Theosophical College, Benares.

Amongst the prominent visitors whom we had the pleasure of having amidst us during the month of September was Mr. H. L. Dutt, retired Dy. Director of Agriculture to the Government of Orissa who came here on invitation to advise on the agricultural work at Sriniketan.

...

The New Science Laboratory is being fitted up and will be ready for use in the next term.

A welcome extension of the present premises of the General Kitchen is being undertaken and it is hoped that the work will be completed during the vacation.

...

As usual, at the end of the term, we were flooded by a large number of dramatic performances. The Sahityika staged a Bengali drama written by one of its members; two scenes from *Merchant of Venice* were staged by college students; the Kala-Bhavana students performed an English play, *The Poetaster of Ispahan*; the Sree-Bhavana Samiti staged Gurudeva's comedy "The Way to Deliverance" (মুক্তির উপায়).

Sriniketan students were not behindhand in this general enthusiasm for dramatics and they produced three plays.

Most of the performances were given in aid of the Andrews Memorial Fund.

...

The institution will remain closed from Oct. 3 to Nov. 4, both days inclusive, on account of the Puja holidays.

...

As we go to Press we have received with the gravest anxiety the news of Gurudeva's illness. On September 27 we received a message from Kalimpong saying that he had developed his old kidney-trouble and that his condition had taken a serious turn. Doctors were rushed from Calcutta and were joined at Kalimpong by the Civil-Surgeon from Darjeeling. The doctors decided upon bringing Gurudeva down to Calcutta to ensure proper treatment. Since his arrival in Calcutta on September 29 we have received the reassuring news of improvement in his condition. We pray that he may successfully pass through the ordeal.

...

## Alumni-News

We are glad to learn that Dr. Jyotsnanda Sen, sometime medical officer in Santiniketan, has received a commission in the Medical Service for the duration of the war.

We are also glad to learn that Profulla K. Das, who completed his course in Kala-Bhavana last summer, has been appointed as an Art-teacher in the Montessori School, Benares.

...

ERRATUM : We regret that the name of the Right Reverend Metropolitan Bishop was given as that of the author of the article on Moral Re-armament appearing in the last issue. The article was written by Mr. Roger Hicks of the Indian Branch of the M. R. A.

## WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of September.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42' E.

Height above M.S.L.-191ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Sept. 30.	No. of Rainy days
Sep., 1989	29°685"	81°5°F	88%	5 M.P.H.	4 M.P.H.	8 M. P. H.	94°F	74°F	7'10"	2'88"	47'88"	9
Sept., 1940	29°755"	81°6°F	86%	8 M.P.H.	4 M.P.H.	7 M. P. H.	95°F	74°F	7'06"	1'85"	86'17"	12



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume IX

NOVEMBER, 1940

Number V

We regret to announce the sad news of the death of our beloved friend and colleague Gourgopal Ghose. He died peacefully at his Sriniketan home after a brief illness on Nov. 9.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

We spent our autumn recess under the shadow of a deep anxiety on account of Gurudeva's illness. Since his removal from Kalimpong to the Jorasanko house he was put under treatment of eminent physicians of Calcutta. Daily bulletins regarding Gurudeva's condition were issued for the most part of the month of October in view of the concern felt all over the country. We of the asrama were in constant touch with Jorasanko over the telephone. Towards the second week of October Gurudeva was declared out of danger. But, there was an unfortunate relapse immediately after and finally on October 24 the doctors issued a statement saying that Gurudeva was not only out of danger but was also on the way to complete recovery. It was with a sense of deep relief and humble thanksgiving that we received the news. Gurudeva is however very weak and the period of convalescence will necessarily be of a long duration. During that time he must have complete rest and freedom from worries of every kind. His physicians in Calcutta have postponed his removal to the asrama for the present. We earnestly hope that he will be back into our midst as soon as he is strong enough to comfortably bear the strain of the journey.

Though it is not possible for us to acknowledge separately numerous messages from our friends and well-wishers making anxious enquiries, expressing deep concern and praying for Gurudeva's early recovery, we take this opportunity to express our grateful thanks to them.

...

It is a matter of very great pleasure that in spite of his many preoccupations Mahatma has constantly kept the thought of the Andrews Memorial in view. In a telegram

addressed to Gurudeva he says ".....Never a day has passed but I have thought of Andrews' Memorial. I won't rest till collections come in as they ought....."

Messrs Bachraj & Co. of Bombay, Treasurers, Andrews Memorial Fund, have received Rs. 1,667/- only, up to date, as contribution. Total contribution separately received at the General Office, Santiniketan, amounts to Rs. 2,891/12/- only.

...

Nandalal Bose and party left on October 1 for Baroda where he has been commissioned by His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda to execute frescoes on the walls of the Royal Mausoleum, the Kiriti Mandir. He returned to the asrama in the first week of November.

...

We extend a hearty welcome to His Excellency Tai Chi-Tao, one of the Pradhanas of the Visva-Bharati Samsad and Chairman of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society, who is leading a Chinese Goodwill Mission from Chungking. The Mission which was due to arrive in Calcutta on November 3, has been delayed in Rangoon on account of the illness of His Excellency. We pray for his early recovery.

His Excellency Tai Chi-Tao is the President of the Examination Yuan of the Chinese National Government. He is a profound scholar and a right hand man of the Generalissimo. After a few days' rest in Calcutta when he intends paying his homage to Gurudeva, His Excellency will start on an all-India tour. We are glad to learn he will stay in the asrama for a fortnight before his departure for China.

...

( Continued on page 38 )

## Man's Lost Heritage

Anilkumar Chanda, Gurudeva's Secretary, said at a recent press interview :

During the last few days whenever Gurudeva had had respite from acute physical discomfort he asked for latest news in the news-papers. He was greatly pleased to hear of the British decision to reopen the Burma route to China. During these intervals Gurudeva has now and again given utterance to thoughts which had been pressing heavily on his mind. The vehemence and persistence with which some of the thoughts were expressed by him indicated how intensely he had felt them. As much as we could remember or note down I have quoted below. Wherever possible his own words have been reproduced but unfortunately we could do so only to a very limited extent.

"I am passing through a period of physical suffering. The doctors have forbidden me to think or to talk. All the same I cannot help it. The doctors do not know that along with physical agony, I am conscious of another pain which they cannot control. The failure of humanity in the West to preserve the worth of their civilisation and the dignity of man which they had taken centuries to build up, weighs like a nightmare on my mind.

It seems clear to me that this failure is due to man's repudiation of moral values in the guidance of their national affairs and to their belief that every thing is determined by a physical chain of events which could be manipulated by man's cunning or might. The consequences of this belief are proving terrible to man. The first experiment in this diabolical faith was launched in Manchuria. What it has demonstrated is this: that though the poor and innocent people of China have suffered, those that were responsible for this suffering and for like suffering elsewhere, have all been drawn into this vortex. Those who built their power on moral cynicism are themselves proving its victims. The nemesis is daily growing more ruthless.

Even that great and proud power which had no copunction in trampling on our rights, is now reduced to the tragic state of having to defend its own elementary right of existence against foreign menace. Despite our humiliation at its hands, it is not a sight which we can contemplate with ease. Rather we should take a lesson from its fate and beware of moral irresponsibility in the direction of our own national affairs.

We are in the habit of calling Chengiz Khan's hordes barbarians, but not even the terrible Mongols were guilty of such gross betrayal of Humanity as the so-called civilised nations of to-day are perpetrating before our very eyes. But in the very act of this condemnation one is arrested by one's sympathy for their sufferings. For their own peoples are paying the price of these wrongs.

My utmost sympathy goes out to the brave and innocent people of China who have suffered most and deserved least of this suffering. They have been the victims of a violence they never perpetrated on others, they have been dragged down into the pit of destruction which they did nothing to dig. I hope they will survive the wrong and will once more be enabled to build up a great civilisation.

In the midst of this insane orgy of violence and destruction, I shall continue to hold fast to my faith in the final recovery of man's lost heritage of moral worth. Man is great. We who stand by him have the privilege of sharing disaster and defeat, but never the ignominy of betraying the great trust of humanity. I know that even in this demented world, there are individuals scattered all over who believe with me."

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## Our Duty

S. N. Mozumdar, I. C. S.

"Truly, this place lives upto its name"—remarked a young man who in his characteristic American way felt impatience at the slow-moving East to which Santiniketan was no exception. The impatience in his mind was irked by the peaceful atmosphere of this place that evening. But he forgot that others found it soothing, that a full and complete life could be lived also in an atmosphere of peace.

It is no denying the fact that the general atmosphere of Santiniketan is one of 'Santi'. What contributes to it largely is the country around it. Large expanses of undulating land with the tall palmyra forming almost the only feature of the landscape on three sides impart an air of restfulness. The distant dark green patches of trees accentuate this feeling, being too far to disturb it. The little Santal villages with their small patches of corn clustered round the huts and a few green fields of paddy naturally blend into this landscape. And what a heavenly peace crowns the horizon morning and evening and what magnificent display of colours on clouds, particularly at sun-set, during the rainy season !

Yet nature herself is not all peaceful. Within her lies constant struggle, aided and abetted by man in his greed and ignorance. The treeless undulations and the 'khoai' (eroded 'gullies') so dear to the inmates of Santiniketan, are ravages wrought jointly by man and nature. Man removed the trees and nature beating upon the bare surface her torrential rains is removing every year the life-giving soil from the surface of the land exposing the gravel, making ever deepening 'gullies' which wash away the good earth and water from usefulness to obscurity.

Below the surface of placidity lies yet another struggle all around us—the grinding poverty of the people amongst whom we live. The soil is poor ; harvests, in the best of seasons, meagre. The country has lost its forests and so the monsoon passes by many a year without yielding its life-giving rain. This year is one such. Rice-fields lie bare. The word goes aound that famine stares the country in the face, the people have not been able to grow the year's food. But I doubt not they face the future stoically, for poverty here is chronic.

What is the remedy ? Gurudeva's answer was Sriniketan. An abode of peace in itself was not enough. His vision of life is one of comprehensive completeness, he cannot visualise life in fragments. Hence, in Sriniketan we find the Siksha-Satra, the organisation of the Brati-Balaks, the seasonal festivals, home-industries to remove material wants and to supplement the income from agriculture, co-operative health organisations, farming and dairying. Gurudeva pictured life as he saw it and planned accordingly. It is up to us to execute the plan and fulfil his dream. As I watched the beautiful ceremony of Briksha-ropan I marvelled at the unerring instinct of genius that was behind it. What love for his fellow-man and for nature is stored up in his great heart ! The little boys sang "Come, baby-plant, come and be a little playmate in our courtyard" as the new baby was laid

in its cradle. If India realised the true significance of that song, monsoons would cease to be the uncertainties they are today, her people would have all the timber and fuel they could need, and fruits aplenty, milk and honey would again flow in the country.

But have we moved in the right direction? Do we serve those who serve us? The country which has so hospitably received us here, where we spend so many years of happy life, which in the varied seasons in the year afford us the many opportunities of pleasure, what do we give it in return? How do we serve the people who live around us? True a few we employ in our service, but that is hardly giving. There is not as yet that close active tie born of love between them and us. Association of interests will generate that love. Let us ask them to grow what we need, all the food that we eat. We can help them to do so. Thus common interest will be created. There are hundreds of weavers around us. We could get all we need to clothe ourselves from them. There are so many other products of the villages that we can use but we do not. Let us resolve to use, as far as possible, only the village products to meet our needs. Let us together cover the treeless patches once again with trees. The ceremony of Briksha-Ropan will remain merely a symbol unless we can once again revive life into these bare surfaces. There are many arts and crafts that we can learn from our rural brethren and it will be our duty to teach them what they can learn from us. So can we serve those amongst whom we live. Let both Sriniketan and Santiniketan join in this endeavour in a renewed effort.

Here in Santiniketan are congregated boys and girls, men and women from the various parts of India. They form, as it were, one family. In this common life the apparent diversities melt away under the sway of the reality of unity. So do we hope to build up our motherland. India is a country and not a continent and we Indians one people. And here in Santiniketan we live it, we grow in it. And when the boys and girls, the youngmen and women return to their home, they will form so many nuclei of unifying forces that will allow no differences of creed, language, clothes, habits and ways of living to mar the fundamental note of unity in us. This is the appeal of Santiniketan.



( Continued from page 84 )

Rathindranath Tagore, General Secretary, Visva-Bharati has issued the following appeal in connection with failure of crop in West Bengal.

The people of Bengal are aware that all over West Bengal there has been almost a complete failure of the paddy crop this year as a result of severe drought. There is already great scarcity and a terrible famine stares in the face of all the western districts in general and Birbhum in particular. It is not necessary to emphasise that the paddy crop is almost the only standby of the people of these districts.

We, through our Rural Reconstruction Department at Sriniketan, have already instituted a preliminary survey of the affected parts in our neighbourhood and it is unlikely that even 10 p. c. of the normal crop would be garnered at the coming harvest.

We have in our hands about Rs. 700 which was saved out of the funds collected by us during the famine of 1935-36 and with this money we have already commenced relief work on a small scale dealing with cases of severest suffering. But at least Rs. 5,000

more will be needed for relief work in the area where our normal reconstruction work is done. Our previous experience tells us that doling out gratuitous relief is of very little use and the best way of giving relief is to engage the able-bodied villageas in the digging of the new wells and tanks and in the re-excavation of dried up ones at reasonable daily wages. If the work could be organised along these lines we can at once give relief to the starving people and increase to some extent at any rate the scanty water supply in the area. We are hopeful that if we can properly organise our work as envisaged we shall be able to give some permanent relief to the people of Birbhum whose greatest curse is the lack of water.

We appeal to the generosity of our countrymen to support us in this work by contributing their mite. Amounts however small, will be gratefully received and duly acknowledged. Contributions earmarked for relief work in our zone may be sent either to the Karma-Sachiva, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, Birbhum or to the Artha-Sachiva, Visva-Bharati, 6/3, Dwarkanath Tagore Lane, Jorasanko, Calcutta.

### WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of October.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42' E.

Height above M.S.L.-191ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Oct. 31.	No. of Rainy days
Oct., 1939	29.887"	79.3°F	86%	8 M.P.H.	8 M.P.H.	5 M. P. H.	98°F	69°F	11.09"	2.27"	58.97"	12
Oct., 1940	29.988"	80.1°F	91%	8 M.P.H.	8 M.P.H.	8 M. P. H.	94°F	68°F	0.58"	0.49"	86.70"	2

## In Memoriam

The year 1940 will remain for long a painful chapter in the history of Visva-Bharati. During this fateful year death has snatched away some of our valued friends thereby creating a gap which will remain ever unfilled. C. F. Andrews, Kalimohan Ghosh, Surendranath Tagore and Amita Sen had already left us and now death has removed Kishorimohan Santra an old colleague and friend. He passed away peacefully on Oct. 20 at his Calcutta residence after a sudden apoplectic stroke. He was 47 at the time of his death.

Kishori Babu had been for some time past suffering from high blood-pressure. A few months ago, due to careful treatment the anxious stage of the disease passed over and Kishori Babu felt better and started doing his usual routine work in a normal manner. Since he rejoined his duties it appeared that he had recouped his health sufficiently to resume the responsible tasks undertaken by him. Only the other day when Gurudeva was brought to Calcutta from Kalimpong on account of his illness Kishori Babu was seen along with his wife at the Railway platform waiting anxiously for the arrival. His deep concern and profound respect and love for Gurudeva could be plainly read in his anxious face. And it can be said with undoubted certainty that Gurudeva all along cherished sincere love and affection for Kishori Babu.

In the passing away of Kishorimohan Santra Visva-Bharati has suffered an irreparable loss. For the last twenty years he had been rendering indispensable service, especially to the publication department of which he was the Assistant Secretary. He had served on various other bodies of Visva-Bharati with equal efficiency and competence.]

Let the soul of our dear friend have eternal rest and peace in Him, who shepherds the universe night and day. Our heartfelt condolence goes to his relatives and we convey our deepest sympathy to his wife Srimati Amiya Santra, an ex-student of Visva-Bharati.

—S. K. Roychoudhury

...

We deeply regret to announce the passing away of Durga Roy, a student in the final year of Kala-Bhavana, in the prime of life, at Santiniketan on October 14, after several weeks' illness. He was a very popular figure at the students' social gatherings and excursions and entertainments. He showed appreciable promise in art and stagecraft. His witticism and vitalizing laughter would be sadly missed in the asrama. May his soul rest in peace. We express our heartfelt sympathy with the parents of the deceased and the other members of the family in their irreparable loss.

...



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume IX

DECEMBER, 1940

Number VI

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## A Poem\*

On my way to recovery  
    when I received Nature's earliest friendly greetings,  
    she held before my eyes her precious gift of endless first surprise.  
And those trees and the blue sky  
    bathed in morning light,  
        though ancient and ever-known,  
revealed to me in them creation's ever-lasting first moment ;  
    and I felt that this one birth of mine  
is woven in the web of many births of many changing forms  
    and like the sunlight composed of varied rays  
        every appearance in its unity  
            is blended with countless invisible other ones.

Santiniketan,  
Nov. 25, 1940.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

---

\* The above is one of the many poems written by Gurudeva during his convalescence. It has been translated from the original Bengali by himself. The first line of the Bengali original is *আবোধের পথে* .....

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Gurudeva returned to the asrama on November 18 after two months' stay outside. Despite the slow recovery from his recent illness, he stood the journey from Calcutta well. As a mark of thanksgiving and rejoicing all departments of the asrama remained closed for the day. Staff, students, and other inmates gave Gurudeva a special reception on his arrival.

In the opinion of the medical advisers Gurudeva's recovery would be hastened in the congenial surroundings and atmosphere of Santiniketan. He is, however, not yet restored to full health and is still confined to his room. We pray for his early and complete recovery.

His Excellency Tai Chi-Tao, President of the Public Service Commission, National Government of China, will reach Santiniketan on Dec. 9. He already met Gurudeva, a few hours after his arrival, in Calcutta. His Excellency presented Gurudeva with an autographed poem by the President of the Chinese Republican Government, and also handed over a letter from Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek.

In his letter Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek says : "I learnt with concern of your recent illness. I have requested President Tai Chi-Tao to personally visit your country and to enquire about your health with a view to expressing my profound respect and kind remembrance. Mr. Tai and I are both deeply interested in the International University at Santiniketan and the China Institute under your sponsorship. I sincerely hope that you would show him how to strengthen further the cultural relationship and co-operation between the Indian and

Chinese people. Nearly two years have elapsed since we first started correspondence in 1938. Wanton aggression remains unchecked and momentous changes occur daily in this world. It is a responsibility of your great people and mine to safeguard the Asiatic civilization. I believe that you, Dr. Tagore, with a vision and insight of the great philosopher of the generation will enlighten me on this point."

President Tai Chi-Tao also carried with him the good wishes and felicitations to Gurudeva from the Academia Sinica.

...

Prof. Ju Péon, who has been a Visiting Professor of the Kala-Bhavana during his stay in India, left Santiniketan on Nov. 22. On the eve of his departure he was given a farewell-party at Uttarayana. M. Ju Péon was the first Chinese artist to visit Santiniketan. His prolonged stay here has undoubtedly contributed to a better understanding of the two neighbouring cultures. His presence here as a Visiting Professor has established a link between the different aspects of artistic creation both in China and India. Although the number of research scholars attached to the Cheena Bhavana has been steadily growing, we have always felt the urgent need of an artistic collaboration between the two sister-countries as well. His absence will be keenly felt both by the staff and the students of the asrama.

...

The Visva-Bharati Sammelani, an association of the Senior Students of the asrama has been revived this term under the new name of Visva-Bharati Chhatra Sangha.

( Continued on page 47 )

## Gora

Rathindranath Tagore

In the sudden death of Gourgopal Ghose the Visvabharati has lost a valuable worker. The loss of such an efficient and devoted officer, though keenly felt, is, however far outweighed by the sense of personal loss that most of us feel. There are few amongst us who are so completely identified with the asrama as was Gora, the name by which everyone knew him at Santiniketan.

I distinctly remember the day when he first came to the school as a child hardly seven years of age. Very smart he looked in his shorts and shirt with a real leather belt. We looked upon his tunic with envy as most of us had to be satisfied with a torn piece of string to keep up our shorts when we did have one to wear. But hardly any of even the bigger boys dared to take any license with this tough little kid—such a dare-devil and so solid and muscular did he look. It was no wonder that very soon he was established as a natural leader of the younger group of pupils and was elevated to the much cherished and highly regarded post of captain and retained it for many years after Santosh Majumdar and myself had left for America.

This recalls to my mind the almost perfect system of students' self-government that functioned during those early years. The few days of school life that my father had undergone in his childhood had left such a bitter memory, that when he started the Brahmacharya Asrama at Santiniketan he was eager to do away with all those things that had galled him most—the crowded class-rooms within the dead and uninteresting whitewashed walls, the lessons doled out to pupils to be learnt by rote like parrots, and most of all the unhealthy relationship of the tyrant and slaves that existed between teachers and students suppressing most effectively all self-respect, all inclinations for self-expression on the part of the child. As a reaction to such a baneful system of education, so universal not only in our country but everywhere at that time, at the beginning of the century when the Santiniketan school was inaugurated, father was even willing to go to the other extreme and bring up the pupils in his charge in an atmosphere of complete freedom. Thus left to ourselves we were able to develop an organisation in perfect harmony with our life and surroundings of the asrama. Not only did the *Bichar Sabha* deal justice and punishment for all offences against the asrama code but the actual management of various activities, including sports, guesthouse, kitchen etc. were conducted by the students.

In this very active organisation—an organisation that believed in responsibility and work and not in finding faults and making complaints—the most important post was that of the captain. His word was law and very seldom did he fail in inspiring wholesome awe and confidence. It was in this atmosphere that Gora had his initiation and in which he took a leading part later on. And I have no doubt that this early training and his achievements in the fields of Santiniketan helped him greatly in distinguishing himself later as one of the foremost football players of Calcutta.

During the 4 years from 1906-1910, I had lost touch with our little world at Santiniketan but on my return from America I was treated to a special sports festival to

celebrate the occasion and it was very heartening to find that the little child had in the meantime grown into a strapping boy and Gora was still holding his own amongst a galaxy of athletes of no mean order. Gora very easily carried away most of the first prizes. Not content with this he soon organized an unofficial circus show in which the star performer was himself. What took our breath away was the carrying over his naked limbs a fully loaded bullock cart !

After matriculation the Scottish Church College claimed him for 5 years and the life of a Calcutta college hostel would have been a misery to him if it had not been enlivened by adventures in the football grounds of the Mohun Bagan Club. The asrama however had not relinquished its claims on the youngman, and when to our chagrin we found that he had started cramming for the law examination after graduating in science, father insisted that he should give it up and join our school as a teacher of Mathematics.\*

Since then Gora never left this place, hardly ever even during vacations. Besides the steady and unflinching loyalty and devotion which characterized him, there was a fund of idealism and bubbling enthusiasm which those who came in touch with him in later years would not easily suspect. The prospect of any new experiment or venture would act like a tonic to his system. When Elmhirst in 1922 came over to start the Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Sriniketan and wanted some enterprising persons to organise it, Gora was one of the foremost to volunteer. Lot of enterprise indeed was needed at that time. To convert the ruins of an ancient house in the midst of a thick jungle into the semblance of an institution needed much spade work. Santosh Majumdar, Kalimohan Ghosh and Gora were the generals of the army led by Elmhirst to do this job. This was in 1922 and now all the three veterans are gone.

I shall never forget the night when after a few weeks of hectic activity our friend Leonard called a halt and we climbed into our ramshackle Ford lorry to go off to the Dumka hills to hold a War Council. Leaving the lorry at the bottom we scrambled up to the top of a hill overlooking the whole valley and lay down to talk in monotonous exchanging ideas and experiences gathered by each of us during the previous weeks. Dusk fell and the stars glittered overhead and we still talked. The moon dipped behind the range of hills across the river and the valley and we still talked until the hot sun of an April morning drove us down to take cover. The intimacy and the companionship of souls established during that one night has been the bedrock on which Sriniketan was founded and helped us more than anything else to weather many a storm during the subsequent years of stress and strain which always accompanies the growing period of an institution.

Gora had been a child of the asrama. His life was inseparable from it. He gave unstintingly more than he took. His loyalty was unquestionable. He was conscientious and highly efficient in his work. But more than all these what bound him to us was a love too deep to be affected by extraneous considerations.

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\* In his letter to C. F. Andrews, dated Santiniketan, July 9, 1917, Gurudeva writes, 'Our former student and a veteran of Calcutta football fields, Gora has taken up the work of a teacher of Mathematics, and I am sure he will prove to be a valuable acquisition to us.'—*Ed.*

## We are in the midst of Famine.

S. N. M.

The district within which we live is in the grip of famine. Around us sheltered in Santiniketan, there is scarcity even now when normally the farmer celebrates the festival of *Nubanna*—the New Rice.

We of the asrama know how little rain we got this year. The result is that already it is so dry, that the authorities are frightened that water for use by the inmates may prove insufficient in the hot months before the summer vacation.

The paddy is practically the only crop in this locality. It has failed. There is a certain period during which the crop must be planted to give a normal yield. But the rains never came in time. Large areas remained fallow. In certain parts there was a promise of a crop even with late planting. But the rains failed again, and the planted crops withered or, where there was a little more rain, will give a poor harvest, perhaps not enough to cover the land as seeds next season. Sugarcane is a useful cash crop in this area. That too has suffered and is still suffering. The cultivator is thus not only deprived of food but has little prospect of earning money from his sugarcane. How will he pay his rent? Will he get a remission? Perhaps not.

What are we of the asrama going to do to help those amongst whom we live? How are we to serve those who serve us? There is a way. Our villages are the producing centres in the country. Let us place money

in the hands of the villagers by buying as much as we can of their products to meet our daily requirements. What does each one of us require? Let each make out a list, indicate therein the quantity required, consolidate the lists and tell Sriniketan to supply the articles. Organizing such supply will be difficult, will take time, there will be flaws, defects, delays at the beginning. We must bear with that. Only those who have had touch with village work know how difficult it is to organise efficient production and distribution in rural areas. It is not necessary, nor possible, that we put money in the hands of each and every man; let money circulate in the village and its distribution will be achieved by itself.

What can we buy from the villages? The first thing that comes to mind is food stuff. If we buy all our rice from the villages, husked by *dhenki* here is employment and food for the villagers. We eat *dal*. We grow little of it in this area, but we can buy the grains and have them split into *dal* in the villages instead of buying *dal* split by the mills elsewhere. Let us buy our oil and ghee from the villages in our neighbourhood and within the district. Give employment to the weavers by placing your order for clothes for the year. Demand nothing but khadi from Sriniketan; you will thereby give bread to a couple of hundred spinners. There are so many uses to which we could bring the potter's wares. Try

and discover them. We have the Kala-bhavana here, how easy it will be to adorn them further by decorations. We must resolve to eat *gur*, made out of sugar-cane and the palm juice in preference to sugar and demand these. There is surely a large demand for baskets of all types, *morahs*, fans, and other products of reeds, bamboos and palm leaves. We must bring these more into use and insist on local products. Ropes and strings are in daily household use. Demand that your requirement in these should be locally produced. It is only when demands exist that production can be organised. We have neglected our villages so greatly that they have fallen behind. Therefore active steps have to be taken to revive the village industries. This is our duty and here is an opportunity offered us to make a beginning. Perhaps it will cost us a little more but that will lie within our sacrifice to help those amongst whom we live when they are in distress. Giving doles is no solution. It is palliative no doubt, but is not a measure that will be a step towards permanent removal of famine

conditions from the district where it seems to have become chronic. A correct balance between agriculture and industries is what is needed. So the cry should be revive the village industries.

Such industries are so few now. We have killed them. Yet possibilities still exist. For instance the Famine Relief Committee of this area has already organised manufacture of *Buri* by village women. Making of paper-bags for groceries has been arranged. There must be many such avenues of employment that will suggest themselves once we have a complete list of our requirements. Suggestions too will be welcome. It is only then that we shall participate in relief of distress in the true sense, when both our mind and energy are directed to the problem.

Visva-Bharati has appealed to the public for assistance in relief work. Let us of the Visva-Bharati undertake to organise assistance in a more permanent form. We shall thereby truly serve those amongst whom we live. Here is an opportunity for the students to serve the country, the people.



( Continued from page 42 )

The first meeting took place on Dec. 1, with S. J. Ramananda Chatterji in the chair.

A Health and Agricultural Exhibition was held at Supur Village from Nov. 19 to 21. The opening ceremony was performed by Marjorie Sykes, Adhyaksha, Education Department Sriniketan. During the exhibition two lectures were delivered before large gatherings, one by Doctor J. C. Chakraborty, Sriniketan, on Maternity and Child-welfare, and another by S. J. C. De, District Agricultural Officer of Birbhum, on Agriculture.

Srimati Eva Ghosh, M.A., a distinguished scholar of Nagpur University, has been appointed Paridarsika of the Sree-Bhavana from the beginning of this term. We extend our hearty welcome to her.

In view of the famine conditions prevailing in this district we have been constrained to abandon the idea of arranging entertainments during the coming 7th Pous celebrations. The 40th Anniversary of the Santiniketan asrama, however, will be observed as usual on Dec. 22, and the Annual General Meeting of the Visva-Bharati will be held on the same date. Immediately after the celebrations students of the

different departments at Santiniketan will leave for their yearly excursion and the usual routine activities will not be resumed till after the New Year's Day.

In order to deal with the scarcity situation in Birbhum District, a Relief Committee has been formed with the following members :

Rathindranath Tagore—President.  
Nandalal Bose  
Surendranath Kar  
Sudhir Ch. Gupta.  
Tarak Ch. Dhar.  
Sakti Ranjan Bose.  
Sukumar Chatterjee—Secretary.

It has been decided to take up relief work at once in the area nearest to Santiniketan and to extend relief work later on with the development of other centres. A number of donations have already been received.

At Laldaha village a Village Hall and Co-operative Store have been opened, the Hall being named after the late Gour Gopal Ghose. The affected villages have been surveyed and doles have been distributed in this area by the boys of Siksha-Satra and Siksha-Charcha Bhavana under the guidance of Tarak Ch. Dhar, Adhyapaka, Education Department.

### WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of November.

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Nov., 1989	29°954"	68°7°F	79%	8 M.P.H.	8 M.P.H.	5 M. P. H.	87°F	54°F	Nil	Nil	58°97"	Nil
Nov., 1940	29°972"	71°4°F	70%	8 M.P.H.	4 M.P.H.	5 M. P. H.	92°F	61°F	Nil	Nil	86°70"	Nil



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume IX

JANUARY, 1941

Number VII

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## A Poem\*

That old day when history was not crowded with news,  
when individual glory was mute,  
They started on the way which was menaced by death,  
in the morning loud with life's adventure.  
They went out to distribute spirit's own immortal food  
to aliens who dwelt in distant countries ;  
And they left their bones to desert sands  
while the turbulent seas wiped all signs of them.

But their life was not futile in their service  
which was hardly begun ;  
They are made one with that eternal spirit of life  
not bounded by bodily frame,  
Which is sustaining in secret  
the strength of ever-lasting man.  
In this morning light I have received the touch  
of their immense compassion,  
And I bow to them.

Udayan,  
Dec. 12. 1940.

*Prabir Ranath Tagore*

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\* The above is an English translation by Gurudev himself of his original Bengali poem appended to the text of his message read out on the occasion of the 7th Paus celebrations. The first line of the Bengali original is সেই পুরাতন কালে ইতিহাস যবে—*Ed.*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

As usual we had our anniversary celebrations on the 7th of Paus ( Dec. 22 ). Owing to the weak state of his health Gurudeva was not able to deliver his address nor was he able to write it himself. He was however so deeply suffering from the agony of diseased humanity that he dictated his message to Amiya Chakravarty and this was read out in the Mandir by Pandit Kshitimohan Sen who acted as the Acharya on the occasion. In his own sermon Pandit Kshitimohan explained to the congregation the inner significance of the 7th of Paus which was the day on which the Maharshi—the spiritual founder of our asrama—got his initiation. An English translation of Gurudeva's address अरुणोदय ( Recovery ) is printed elsewhere in this issue of the *News*.

Besides routine functions held during the anniversary celebrations there were two separate exhibitions ; one of paintings, etc. by ex-students and present students of the Kala-Bhavana and another of handicrafts and drawings by Patha-Bhavana students.

We congratulate the management of the *Hindusthan Standard* on having brought out a special Santiniketan number on the day of the anniversary. The number is replete with articles written on the various activities of our institution—most of them by members on our staff.

...

The Annual General meeting of the Visva-Bharati was held at Amrakunja in the morning of December 23. Authorised by Gurudeva, Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee took the chair. In his address the Chairman explained that the annual gathering of the *Sudasyas* was significant in as much as it provided an opportunity to take stock of work done so far

to realize the comprehensive ideal set up before us by our Founder-President. He then read out extracts from the writings of Gurudeva where the aim of the Visva-Bharati, academic and otherwise, had been propounded with an unmistakable clarity. He regretted that though our countrymen exploited Gurudeva's name to bolster up their national pride they were found wanting in sincerity and zeal to work out in the practical field those very precepts of Gurudeva which were his noblest gifts to India and the world. Emphasising the international aspect of the Visva-Bharati, the Chairman maintained that the significance of the institution as providing a home to the whole world grew daily in magnitude according as separationist tendencies served increasingly to divide humanity and confine its divisions within narrow folds. Concluding Sj. Chatterjee impressed upon the audience the need of repeated perusal of Gurudeva's writings bearing upon the aims and ideals of the Visva-Bharati.

In submitting the report of the working of the Visva-Bharati for the year 1940, Rathindranath Tagore, Karma Sachiva, referred to the background of unhappy circumstances with which the year began namely the successive deaths of many of our friends and devoted workers, severe famine in this part of Bengal, the European and the Far-Eastern War and the recent serious illness of Gurudeva. He maintained that in spite of these and other difficulties—mainly financial, normal progress was maintained in all our various departments. The Annual Report ( 1940-41 ) will be brought out together with the Balance Sheets and Audited Accounts at an early date.

( Continued on page 58 )

## Recovery\*

Rabindranath Tagore

The asrama is celebrating the 7th Paus and yet, though I am here it is not possible for me to take my place in the festival—this has never happened before. Weakness of ill-health and age are removing me from all external events. From that distance I shall briefly address you, for not only am I forbidden by doctors to exert my mind on things, my illness also makes such concentration difficult.

In youth's abundant strength old age appeared to me as deprivation, that is to say, such a condition meant gradual loss of power preluding death. But now I can realise the positive aspect of age. The outer shell of being, which is ego, ceases to engage my eager interest. It is like the fruit which loses its attachment to the outer covering now grown less necessary. Completeness lies in its inner core. Youth's immaturity cannot imagine the fulfilment of the core, and therefore has no faith in ripeness. Our energies, in young age, are mainly directed outside; any hurt inflicted there causes extreme misery. Not so in old age. Realisation through inner maturity proceeds with supreme assurance. External loss or insult fails to make us miserable. But this inwardness must not be regarded as the possession of age alone; in fact, it is because in youth we are apt to give excessive value to external things that we suffer and widen the sphere of unreal suffering in society. For it is in our external aspect that we are separated from each other and each confined within a narrow reality.

To-day when recovering from illness I can realise more clearly what recovery means. But recovery is the wealth of life in all its stages. In a fully recovered condition we can establish complete relationship with the Universe. Our existence in the world becomes joyous. Our physical being is then our ally. It is when we are ill that harmony is lost and suffering affects our body and its limbs. Our physical being is then in a hostile condition. Similarly when spiritual truth is pervasive in our inner being and its influence reigns, we have peace, we are at peace with all things. In this quest of inward calm, leading to harmony of relationship with all, age should not count. Confused attachments hamper youth from attaining such realisation; but these can be transcended and the spirit released for right relationship. Then there is peace in humanity, and no more fear; death itself is transcended.

In man's history, different races reveal gradations in realisation. European countries from the outset, have sought fulfilment outside and with greed at the helm set forth to amass wealth by plundering other peoples, especially in Asia and Africa. Science, the help-mate of true self-realisation, has been dragged from pure pursuit of knowledge and turned into an instrument for spreading world-wide disaster. Where this process of devastation will end I do not know. On the other hand, some races have with comparative ease followed their own peaceful intent and saved their soul from violent turmoil. They have

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\* English translation by Amiya Chakravarty of the original Bengali address by Gurudeva entitled **বিক্রম**—Ed.

not striven to prove man's glory by contention and fight, they have considered warfare as barbaric. China is the great example. For many centuries she has enriched her mind by creating literature, incomparable art and deep philosophical thought. The conduct of her peoples has revealed their inward nature, and that has also been the secret of their supremacy. To-day that great civilisation is in grievous clash with greed using scientific weapons.

I believe that when this conflict will be ended, China will once more establish the eternal ancient peace on earth. Those who have concentrated on greed, even if they are victorious, will perish in self-defeat. Greed's finality is *Mahati binastih*—the Great Destruction. Mutual suspicion and rapacity being savagely primitive, stupefy the mind; even when hurt, such habits are not easily cured. This cruel lesson of history we must learn, both individually and as a nation, and meditate thereupon. For Western contagion is spreading fast among our people in India defeating our spiritual heroism. From our sages we got the supreme *mantram*, "Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam"—these three aspects of truth are held together. Peace, Beneficence, and Unity among all mankind; the significance of this message reveals man's Religion. The imperatives of Peace we must express without fear or hesitation. Unite we must, in mutual love, in beneficent conduct. Fervently I hope that this message, given from the depth of our ancestor's heart, will remain as text for our contemplation and be the messenger of peace in humanity.

The civilisation which gives permanence to things external in place of spiritual truth injures others by its greedy accumulations and that injury recoils upon itself. Where is the finality of such assault and reprisal? Even if one such civilisation turns out victorious over its rivals it must still further entrench its stronghold of greed; if it is defeated, it must pursue aggressive passion with greater intensity. Such civilisation cannot be called civilised, for civilisation is the wealth of all mankind. In this war, the leaders of one side at least profess that they are fighting on behalf of mankind. But the characteristic feature of greed is that it does not recognise as human beings those who are outside its narrow boundaries; for, to those who cannot accept spiritual truth as the objective, the sense of human relationship is obscured by callosity. Unity with mankind, that is to say, *maitri*—universal sympathy and fellowship with others fails to arouse their enthusiasm. We must remember that India devoted to Lord Buddha, once sent its emissaries to far away lands, they braved mortal dangers in the mission of good-will; they did not set out to plunder other people's wealth.

According to Western literary code, epics are based on war. In the *Mahabharata* also the greater part of the story is occupied with description of war, but its finality is not in war. It does not portray vindictive hilarity on the part of the Pandavas at the recovery of lost property from seas of blood. On the contrary, we see the victorious Pandavas leave their conquered wealth to the cremation fire of the Kurukshetra battlefield and take to the road of renunciation and so enter the realm of peace. That is the supreme message of the *Mahabharata*. And this message is for all men of all ages. Selfish enjoyment has to be purified by renunciation. True civilisation offers invitation to all in its rejoicing, barbarism prides itself on exclusiveness. But greed is blind, and to-day it over-rides the greater part of humanity. Through the difficult process of self-

realisation man must find his way to civilisation, and, attaining dignity of truth, spread humanity in this world.

The Age is inclement, savagery waves its banner and stampedes on the sanguinary fields of death. But let us not mistake the convulsions of hysteria as symptom of power. For long, mankind has accepted greed's accumulations as wealth and lost itself in the mirage of possessiveness. To preserve the store-houses of greed, world-wide rearmament and warfare have been launched. Those store houses, however, are being shattered to-day crushing humanity under their ruins.

I have no more to say, neither have I the strength to do so. The supreme message of humanity has been uttered in our land and I take leave by repeating that message.

( Continue<sup>d</sup> from page 50 )

The following were elected to the Samsad for the year 1941-42 by the different constituencies :—Pandit Kshitimohan Sen, Mrs. D. M. Bose, Mrs. S. N. Roy, Dr. Kalidas Nag, Dr. R. Ahmed, Surendra-nath Kar, Promodaranjan Ghosh, Tarak Chandra Dhar and Prafulla Chandra Sen Gupta. Messers Ray & Ray, Chartered Accountants, were re-elected auditors for the following year.

The meeting came to be concluded with a resolution conveying respect to Gurudeva and praying for his early recovery and long life. The proposal came from the Chair and was adopted unanimously.

...

The programme of publishing the collected edition of Gurudeva's Bengali works is being carried on according to schedule inspite of shortage of paper, increased printing charges and other difficulties brought upon by the War. An album of paintings done by Gurudeva along with illustrative poems ( চিত্রলেখা ) has been published. Two new books by him entitled বেগমশায়া ( In sick-bed ) and তিন সঙ্গী ( Three companions ) are already in the market. The former consists of poems written by Gurudeva during and since his recent serious illness and, besides containing a new lyrical note based on a fresh range of experiences, it

displays bold technical innovations. The other, which is a book of three short stories, will be welcome as the latest development of a new form of stories that Gurudeva has been writing before his illness.

The Loka-Siksha series has had a fresh addition in পৃথ্বী-পরিচয় ( Prithvi-Parichaya ) by Pramathanath Sen Gupta, Adhyapaka, Siksha-Bhavana. The book has a foreword by Gurudeva and is loaded with useful and interesting information. It is hoped that the work might come handy as a sequel to বিশ্ব-পরিচয় ( Visva-Parichaya ) by Gurudeva. Three more books on popular science will come in for publication in the series at an early date.

...

Gurudeva has sent the following message to the conference recently held in Calcutta in order to protest against the Secondary Education Bill.

"Bengal's great inheritance is her culture which can only be threatened by our own weakness ; no external power can deprive us of freedom in the sacred shrine of learning or compel us to compromise our integrity by menace of fear or favour.

We are proud of our Bengali language, which must be preserved from harm and nourished by the devotion of our people ; no sacrifice would be too great in the task of strengthening its foundations in the minds

of our new generation at the educational institutions and outside.

Having devoted over 70 years of my life to the service of our mother language and to the welfare of Bengal, I have earned the right to make this appeal. My age and health prevent me from taking part in public affairs, but the danger which menaces the cultural existence of my own province has touched me profoundly and I cannot help sending these few words even from my sick-bed."

...

Our asrama was recently honoured by the four-day visit of His Excellency President Tai Chi-Tao of the Examination Yuan of the National Government of China. President Tai was accompanied by other members of the Goodwill Mission of which he was the leader. In order to commemorate the event we are bringing out a special bulletin where a detailed account of the visit will be found.

...

Christmas Day was celebrated in the asrama on December 25. Traditional English Christmas carols were sung at the early morning Vaitalik, and a service was held in the Mandir at 7 a. m. The song composed by Gurudeva for Christmas, 1939, was sung again with two others appropriate

for the day; both these were favourites of C. F. Andrews, who was specially remembered on this festival on which he had so often conducted our worship. Adhyapaka Biren Barui led a reverent assembly in the Lord's prayer, and told the children the story of the shepherds and the angel's song. Verses were read from the lovely Messianic prophecies of Isaiah and the address was given by Marjorie Sykes, who spoke of Jesus as the King of men and the Revealer of God, and of the unfailing inspiration of his dedicated spirit.

...

The workers of Sriniketan are regularly visiting the four unions of which the Relief Committee has taken charge and distributing doles to people in want of food after careful enquiry. Clothes and Chaddars are also being distributed.

The Marwari Relief Society of Calcutta has deputed two medical units, one consisting of a Doctor and a Compounder and another of a Kaviraj and a Compounder with medicines and diet for giving medical relief to people suffering from Malarial fever and other diseases. This has proved to be of great benefit to the people as a virulent epidemic of malaria is raging in this part.

Total donation to the Relief Fund amounts to Rs. 2,282/8/- up to date.

### WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of December.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42' E.

Height above M.S.L.-191ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity past 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Dec. 30.	No. of Rainy days
Nov. 1939	80.186"	60.4°F	70%	3 M.P.H.	4 M.P.H.	5 M. P. H.	82°F	49°F	Nil	Nil	58.97"	Nil
Nov. 1940	80.087"	60.2°F	70%	4 M.P.H.	4 M.P.H.	7 M. P. H.	88°F	47°F	0.05"	Nil	86.75"	2

## Alumni News.

Owing to inclement weather the Annual General Meeting of the Asramika Sangha could not be held this year on the morning of December 22 as previously arranged. It was held the next day in the afternoon. At 2 p. m. ex-students from different parts of India who had come to participate in the fortieth anniversary of the Institution assembled in the *Amrakunja*. A large number of the present students also attended the meeting at the invitation of the old boys. S. J. Ramananda Chatterji presided over the function.

In his address S. J. Chatterjee explained how the old boys could render constructive help to their Alma Mater according to their respective means and capacities. The Alumni Association might gradually organise itself into a vital body successfully fostering and propagating the educational ideals of Gurudeva throughout the world. It might then effectively function as a medium of communion between Visva-Bharati and the world at large. Referring to *Purbatani*—the proposed building of the Sangha to be constructed at Santiniketan, he said, "It is imperative to have your own shelter here, where, from time to time, you could come and stay freely and could thereby renew and revitalize your old relationship with the asrama. May this effort be crowned with success with the collective financial co-operation from all your members who, I am sure, will never stop short of making wholesome donations for this purpose."

The business meeting of the Sangha was held on the 22nd afternoon in Cheena-Bhavana. About forty members attended the meeting which was presided over by Prodyot Kumar Sen Gupta.

The Annual Report and the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures for the year 1940 were read and unanimously accepted. These were followed by important discussions and deliberations regarding the proposed building for the ex-students. It was finally resolved that in expectation of the allotment of a new site by the Visva-Bharati, Rathindranath Tagore, Treasurer, Asramika Sangha, be authorized to transact the sale of the present Bungalow and to decide and execute all concomitant legal matters. It was further resolved to form a Committee consisting of Rathindranath Tagore, Tarun Kumar Roy, Birendra Mohan Sen, Tapan Mohan Chatterjee and the Secretary, Asramika Sangha, with powers to arrange details regarding the site, probable cost, plan of construction and raising of further funds.

The following were elected Office-bearers for the year 1941:

Tarun Kumar Roy—Vice-President.

Saroj Ranjan Choudhury—Secretary.

Anupananda Bhattacharya—Asstt. Secy.

Nirmal Chandra Chatterjee	} members of Executive Committee.
Pulin Behari Sen	

Prafulla Chandra Sen was unanimously elected to the Samsad as the representative of the Sangha.



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume IX

FEBRUARY, 1941

Number VIII

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## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

We are glad to be able to say that on the whole Gurudeva is maintaining the progress in his health even though he still continues to be confined to his own rooms. We hope and pray that before long he may be restored to full health and thus be able once again to take the same active part in our asrama life as in the former days.

...

The death anniversary of Borodada was observed on Jan. 17 and that of Maharshi on Jan. 19. Services in the Mandir and meetings were held on the two occasions.

The 11th Magh festival was celebrated with befitting solemnity in the evening of Jan. 24. Gurdial Mallik conducted the Divine Service on the occasion.

After the Service Gurudeva's message was read out. The English translation of the message is given elsewhere in this issue of the *News*.

...

Amongst the eminent visitors whom we had the pleasure of having with us during the last month the following may be mentioned :—Prof. Satyen Bose, Dr. & Mrs. George S. Arundale, Mr. Ernest Rodrigo, Director of Agriculture, Ceylon and Mrs. Rodrigo, Prof. Wittemore of Harvard University, Lala Sir Shri Ram and others.

Prof. Satish Chandra Ghosh, Calcutta University Inspector of Colleges, accompanied by Prof. J. N. Mukherji and Prof. Himadri Mukherji came to visit the institution on January 27.

...

A heartfelt tribute was paid to the genius and personality of Gurudeva and to Visva-Bharati by Dr. and Mrs. Arundale at a meeting held in Sinha Sadan on Jan. 23. Addressing the students assembled Dr. Arundale described how since he came out to India at the bidding of Dr. Annie Besant he had the opportunity of making personal contacts with many eminent Indians who had helped India on her onward path. Referring to Gurudeva as the pre-eminent personality among those distinguished servants of the motherland, the speaker said, "You are living with him in the evening of his life—may this evening be as long as it is so full of splendour. To my mind what you learn here by way of education—academic and otherwise, is not nearly so important as the fact of your proximity with that world-beloved figure who incarnates the soul of India as none have ever had. Whatever may be the ordinary tenor of your life now and afterwards, you are sure to feel his personality stirring within you because

you have had the privilege of having Dr. Tagore as your Guru. I would like to believe that you have not been brought here just by chance or accident. It is Mother India who has sent you here to Santiniketan, to this shrine prepared by her greatest son where all eyes are turned in adoration and reverence. Now that we have at least been able to make our pilgrimage and had the privilege of meeting this afternoon your great Guru we shall take back with us a great glow of happiness which will deepen our inspiration. Before concluding I would like to ask you to follow in the spiritual footsteps of your great leader. May his spirit abide in you and increase in you, now as always”.

In her speech Mrs. Rukmini Devi said that it was in places like Santiniketan that national genius which was to shape New India was being fostered in order that Mother India might one day become the mother of nations all over the world.

...

The distress situation in the district of Birbhum continues to grow acute, day by day. Our workers have already taken up an area of about 70 sq. miles around Santiniketan. We are working in co operation with the Marwari Relief Society of Calcutta who have been of great help.

A charity cinema show in aid of the Visva-Bharati Famine Relief Fund was organised by our workers at the Bijoli on the 19th January last. The use of the cinema house was kindly lent for the occasion by its proprietor Mr. Haripriya Pal at a nominal rent. We are grateful to the members of the Asramika Sangha (Calcutta Branch) and to Mrs. W. M. Bhandari, Mr. G. Amankar and Prof. Sushil Chatterji for organising the sale of tickets. Our special thanks are due to the Ananda Bazar Patrika,

Hindusthan Standard and the Desh for publishing the advertisements free of cost. A net amount of Rs. 576/- has been received from the sale proceeds, after defraying all incidental costs.

...

The Lokasiksha Samsad Examinations will commence on March 24. Altogether 46 candidates from 11 different centres have been given permission to sit for the Provesika, Adya, Madhya and Antya Examinations under the auspices of the Samsad. It is gratifying to note that this year as in the last there is a fair number of female candidates. If the Samsad succeeds in this way in creating a field for female education it will surely be an achievement of no little merit.

...

Several new appointments have been made during the last few months. We extend our hearty welcome to Vinayak Masoji—an ex-student, who has now joined the Kala-Bhavana staff, to Anil Kumar Chatterji, M. Com. ( of Siksha-Bhavana 1934-38 ) who has been appointed as Assistant Accountant at the General Office, to Adhir Chandra Banerji, B. Sc. ( Lond. ) the newly appointed Economist at Sriniketan and to Dr. Shibapada Ganguli, M. B., D. P. H., appointed as Assistant Medical Officer at Sriniketan.

...

The eighteenth anniversary of the foundation of the Sriniketan Rural Reconstruction Institute was celebrated on February 5 with appropriate ceremonies. S. J. Ramananda Chatterji presided on the occasion. Rathindranath Tagore, Sachiva, Sriniketan, was unable through indisposition to attend the function. His Annual Report was read out at the meeting. “On this day” the Report went “we cannot do better than think

( Continued on page 61 )

## A Message\*

In our country communalism of a rank nature often takes the place of true religion. It tends to express itself in a pronounced form and is more often than not accompanied by the deplorable habit of personal bickering and abuse. In this circumstance one feels diffident in expressing one's views in the face of a hostile crowd. Fortunately for me I have almost come to the end of my days and I am no longer intimidated by the present and the immediate, face to face as I am with the eternal. My days of diffidence are definitely over.

The truth and significance of the 11th of Magh have not received recognition at the hands of a vast majority of my countrymen. What they do not accept they are ready to desecrate; which explains why that great man Mahatma Rammohun has even now to suffer from the heat and passion of an adverse crowd. As however this is of a piece with the other failings in our national character, it will be futile to make this fact an incentive to mutual recrimination. Let us for this occasion at least forget all controversy and combine to pay our homage of respect to the memory of that man the force of whose character and example has served to mark out this anniversary function. Opinions, however they might differ, will surely not be indifferent to this significance of the occasion. I am emboldened to expect this mental attitude from my countrymen in the belief that they perhaps realise that in honouring her great sons we do honour to our motherland herself.

We sometimes tend to exaggerate the seamy side of the religion and religious observance of the foreigners especially when they are at an advantage over us in other spheres of life. This is more so when our relation with them hurts or humiliates us. It is no good deliberately blinding ourselves to the many good points which both their religion and individual conduct reveal. Despite many obstacles inherent in our social structure we have had our due share of great men who had risen above the limitations. It is we who have belittled their greatness in our own ignorance. This niggardly attitude towards personalities of moment makes the history of our land a painful reading.

The religion of Christ is pre-eminently a human religion. The Christ was also the Son of Man and accepted a human existence. That is why we find that the true Christians are always the true philanthropists wherever they may be. Even if we may discover some imperfections and flaws in Christian precepts we must at least admit that the ideal of fellowship and dedication inherent in Christianity affords its followers the unique opportunity of coming into a loving contact with the whole human race. From what I have seen and known it is clear to me that whenever and wherever they have touched the apex of eminence, in life or in literature, they have also been truly and convincingly human. In that higher plane they have shown no poverty of spirit, there they have definitely ascended to a level of civilization which is not tainted by the clash of selfseeking

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\* The above is an English translation by Kshitis Roy of the original Bengali address written by Gurudeva on the occasion of the 11th Magh service in the Mandir—Ed.

pursuits. Whereas, in our own country, religion instead of acting as a binding force has served to disrupt all friendly association ; religion which should properly have been an aid to spiritual realization, has only served to create endless dissension and quarrels.

Where social conduct is not regulated by separate religious groups the virus of communalism cannot bring about disharmony amongst the individual members of the community. China is a good example ; her civilization makes room for many sects but sectarian or religious views even when widely different, have never been able to deal a blow to the integrity of China's social condition. There was a time when the inner spirit of Christianity was denied by Christians themselves. In the name of crusade and on the plea of divine wrath they had camouflaged their tyranny over non-Christians, while their essential motive was to gain sovereignty over the weak by sheer physical force. They allowed their own rational powers to be clouded by a superstitious faith in the tenets of a corrupt church. In spite of many weak spots in the social structure of Europe today, one must admit that religious intolerance or communalism is not one of them. One of the secrets of the might of her nations lies in the fact that in Europe society and religion have been kept definitely apart. The predominance of meaningless ceremonies in the name of religion in our day to day life has been mainly responsible for the sapping of our national strength. It degrades the ideal of pure religion and emphasises the tyranny of superstitious customs. I call to mind in this connection an event which happened in South Malabar. A non-Brahmin doctor happened to call at the house of a Brahmin. On the plea that the doctor had, in so calling, used a road alongside a tank and so contaminated its water, injunction was sought of the Court by which the poor Brahmin was to have been called upon to pay towards the purification of the whole tank. In this instance we find a foolish custom trying to enlist the support of law in order to defeat conjointly the purpose of the eternal religion. Strangely enough such dehumanizing practice has not only been connived at, but has actually been applauded by our countrymen. Very rarely have we had great souls born amongst us who had raised their voice against sacrilegious religion and irrational practice. They had cried in wilderness and their pains have been rewarded by the repetition of the very same rituals and ceremonies. As it has been, so it is today ; and so will it be so long as society is allowed to abuse the Religion of Man.

It was this disruptive impact which had disintegrated our society and smashed it into a thousand fragments. And now we find a large body of our own countrymen held up to contempt by ourselves, segregated and labelled under that odious name—the untouchables. The wrong that we had done them had recoiled upon ourselves. Their stupidity, their weakness and their humiliation had acted like a dead weight and had prevented the country at large from marching onward.

Curious though it may appear today, this spirit of exclusiveness was entirely foreign to India's religions and traditional heritage. Not to speak of human beings alone, each and every living thing was associated by our great forebears with the source of life itself. Perhaps no scripture had spoken such noble words as these, "*He sees truly who finds his own self in everything that is.*" That comprehensive outlook, which recognised every living thing as but manifestation of the Soul, came to be lost to us. Our intellects befogged by ceremonies we merely sowed in every home the seed of dissension and disunity.

Thus our entity as a nation was broken up into fragments and we come face with a grave crisis. When things were at such a pass that courageous Brahmin Rammohun Roy was born. At every step he had fought against superstition, boldly had he stood against the acceptance of foolish customs. He was disgraced in his own days and our own days had not spared him.

The days are adverse and the need grows upon us to discourage futile discussion and remind ourselves over again that Rammohun's message to his country was deep down an expression of the *Sadhana* to which he dedicated his great life. In the Upanishads we come across the mantram "*The creator of this universe has but this form—He is.*" It is not mere abstract existence, because once the Truth is known conscious realisation of the Being becomes easy through the process of Reason. Where this Reason is held in contumely, wherever we have denied humanity by not applying the force of pure unclouded Reason in practical life—we have failed and failed miserably as a whole community. Through Reason and realisation we arrive at an understanding of the Infinite Soul and not through the artificial medium of *Karma*. Once we conceive the idea of the Oversoul, barriers dividing man from man is bound to crumble away giving place to an all-embracing harmony. In order to realise Brahma through the help of the message of the Upanishads we have to accept this universal truth and so realise spiritual truth with the help of Reason. "*The quest of the Sages comes to be fulfilled when their search ends in Him. Thus do they become self-realised, devoid of passion and full of calm. Everywhere they comprehend Him who moves everywhere and freed from struggle their souls mingle with the Great Soul obtaining access everywhere.*" The sages enter in spirit into every thing once they become one with the all-pervasive soul. According to our *Shastras* that is the highest achievement of humanity. This message was reiterated by Mahatma Rammohun Roy. He severed the shackles of ceremony and thus emancipated an apostate society and helped it on the path of self-realization. He gave to India the message of unity which would go to establish a relationship of mutual beneficence born of Truth and Reason. Aberration of religion has terrible consequence, its effect is much more insidious than that of malicious conflict in other spheres of life. Beyond the mist of nationwide unreason and superstition he stood with his bold and wonderful intellect. He employed his incomparable force of character in the service of Truth which he would not allow to compromise. In this endeavour he was not only single-handed but was also the sole object of the attack of perfidy.

Let us on this occasion bring honour to ourselves and to our country by receiving in our hearts the great gift of his *Sadhana*.

( Continued from page 58 )

with grateful remembrance of the young man who came all the way from America to found this institution in a corner of the Birbhum District. To Leonard K. Elmhirst and his noble wife we offer our heartfelt thanks. Our mind then turns to

those indefatigable spirits who were his compatriots and helped to build up Sriniketan during its birth pangs and whom we miss sorely on this occasion, I mean the two of our veteran leaders Kalimohan Ghosh and Gourgopal Ghosh. May their souls rest in peace and may the noble example they have left behind inspire us to

follow up the good work they did during their life-time”.

After giving a detailed account of the progress of the institution during the year preceeding, the Sachiva maintained that efficiency and service had been combined to bring about an all-round improvement in the various activities of the Institution.

In conclusion the Report said, “Sriniketan has alway stood for experiment and progress. It will be fatal if any day we settle down and be satisfied with a fixed programme of work. If we sacrifice the dynamic ideal of our institution for stability and security, we shall no longer remain pioneers but gravitate towards mediocrity. I do not deny that there has been considerable progress and achievement at Sriniketan during the last 18 years. But the future lies pregnant with possibilities. Fresh minds are being attracted here ; there seems to be a growing mood of appreciation in our country for the work of Sriniketan. To those, who have been with us and seen the institution grow, I appeal for a closer understanding, a mutual confidence and a will to pull together.”

In his presidential remarks Sj. Ramananda Chatterji emphasised the need of rural reconstruction work in a country mainly agricultural, like India. Saying that small beginnings often presage great ends. Sj. Chatterji said, “Inadequately equipped though we are in resources, human and material, it should be our object to build up a sound nucleus of pioneer work in rural reconstruction. Once such a nucleus is formed, small though it be, I have faith its growth will be irresistible.”

A Health and Industries Exhibition held in connection of the anniversary was inaugurated by Sjta. Hemlata Devi. The annual rally of the Brati-Balakas ( village scouts ), and a gathering of the Sriniketan

Alumni Association were also held during the anniversary celebrations.

The annual conference of the Rural Reconstruction Societies and the Health Societies of the district was held at Sriniketan on Feb. 6, with Sj. Ramananda Chatterji in the Chair. Mrs. S. N. Roy delivered at the conference a lecture on the fundamentals of village welfare work. On the same day Begum Samsun Nahar Mahmood presided over a conference of ladies from surrounding villages.

...

An exhibition of paintings etc., by Vinayak Masoji was recently held at the Havell Hall. It remained open for a week.

...

We regret that Nandalal Bose has not been keeping good health for some time now. He has proceeded to Benares for a change and will stay there until complete recovery.

...

We were represented at the 1941 session of the Western Bengal Education week at Chinsurah by Marjorie Sykes, Adhyaksha, Education Department, Sriniketan and Nirmal Chatterji, Adhyapaka, Patha-Bhavana. They were invited by the organisers to open symposiums relating to important problems of education.

...

Under the auspices of the Vidya-Bhavana a series of seven extension lectures will be delivered during February, 1941.

...

We are glad to note that S. V. Malligoda and Kalu Mia, both students of the Sangit-Bhavana have earned distinction for themselves at the 1940-'41 session of the All Bengal Music Conference recently held in Calcutta. Besides the award of a Certificate of Merit and Silver Medal, Malligoda has also won the *Nritya Srestha Silpi Challenge Cup* for the best dancer.

As usual after the 7th Pous festival our students went out on excursion tours. The Kala-Bhavana students under Nandalal Bose went to Rajgir and Nalanda, Siksha-Bhavana party under Anil Kumar Chanda to Benares and Patha-Bhavana students under Krishna Kripalani went to Puri and Bhuvanagar.

...

We had our Annual Sports on the Sri Panchami Day. The same day a demonstration of lathi, sword and dagger play was given by Adhyapak Saktipada Chakravarty and his students. We played during the last month two friendly Cricket matches with visiting teams from Calcutta. Though we lost both the matches we acquitted ourselves well considering that we have only recently taken to the game.

...

The Silpa-Bhavana, Sriniketan, participated in several exhibitions. Our exhibits were awarded medals, certificates and cash prizes at the Patna and Gwalior Exhibitions.

...

The Seraikella party of "Chhau" dancers led by Kumar Suvendra came on a brief visit and gave demonstration of their style of dance both before Gurudeva and the inmates of the asrama.

...

We are informed by the Santiniketan Sachiva that the supply of water from our tube well is satisfactory and adequate and that the rumour that the institution may close earlier for the Summer Vacation is without any foundation whatsoever.

## Alumni News.

The present ex-students' bungalow has been sold to the Visva-Bharati. We are glad to announce that a site has already been selected and that the Building Committee of the Asramika Sangha is making every effort to have the new building constructed at an early date.

We are happy to learn that Dr. J. C. Roy, Director of the Indian Institute of Medical Research has presented the China Defence League with two boxes of medicines of his own discovery. The medicines will be used for the amelioration of the sufferings of the disabled soldiers of China.

## WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of January.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42' E.

Height above M. S. L.-191ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity past 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Jan. 41.	No. of Rainy days
Dec. 1940	80°087"	56°7°F	71%	8 M.P.H.	4 M.P.H.	5 M.P.H.	85°F	46°F	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Jan. 1941	80°074"	59°7°F	71%	8 M.P.H.	8 M.P.H.	5 M.P.H.	84°F	47°F	0°22"	0°11"	0°22"	4



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BY

**RABINDRANATH TAGORE**

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**Editor—Rathindranath Tagore.**

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume IX

MARCH, 1941

Number IX



Lino-cut—By Bani Bhanja Choudhuri ( Age-11 )

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

We are glad that Gurudeva's condition continues maintaining steady improvement. The inmates of the asrama had a pleasant surprise a few days ago when they found Gurudeva making a round of the asrama in his car. In the meantime we are heartened to see that his literary activities have not much suffered owing to long convalescence. A book of his recent poems entitled 'Arogya' ( অরোগ্য ) will shortly be brought out. A book of his short stories for children is in the making.

...

We have great pleasure in announcing the receipt of a generous donation from President Tai Chi-Tao amounting to Rs. 10,000. Out of this sum Rs. 1,000 have been earmarked for Famine Relief work under the auspices of the Visva-Bharati, Rs. 6,000 for improvement and extension of the Cheena-Bhavana and the library of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society and Rs. 3,000 for effecting repairs of Maharshi's seat of meditation (Chhatimtala). For this and for other acts of friendliness to our institution we convey our sincerest gratitude to President Tai. A souvenir bulletin ( No. 3 ) has been published by the Sino-Indian Cultural Society to commemorate the visit of His Excellency and the Chinese Goodwill Mission.

...

We are glad that Nandalal Bose is back to the asrama fully restored in health after his month's convalescence in Benares.

...

The All-India Village Industries Association who have been working in co-operation

with Sriniketan have already begun their work of reviving village industries in areas under our jurisdiction. Pressing of oil seeds with the help of *ghani* has been undertaken in one of the centres and the yield has secured a ready market in our asrama.

...

Among the eminent visitors whom we had the pleasure of having with us during the last month the following may be mentioned: Madame Sophia Wadia of the P. E. N., ( Mlle ) Dr. Camacho, Mr. W. M. Clark, Principal Bengal Agricultural Institute, Dr. F. Vreede the well known Dutch Indologist. Dr. Vreede delivered two lectures, one on Indian culture and the other on Islamic culture, under the auspices of the Vidya-Bhavana.

...

The Calcutta University Examinations are on. The authorities of the University having sanctioned the proposal of establishing an examination centre in Santiniketan for Matriculation, Intermediate and B. A. examinations, our students have not only been saved a lot of expense but a good deal of inconvenience as well. The University Syndicate has decided to extend recognition of the Siksha-Bhavana ( under Section 7, Chapter XVI of the University Regulations ) for a further term of two years.

...

All the various departments had their full quota of picnics and socials which seem somehow to crowd into the two last winter months.

...

( Continued on page 71 )

## Silpa-Bhavana

Rathindranath Tagore

Silpa-Bhavana is the youngest of the institutions of Visva-Bharati, having been created an independent department with a managing board of its own in 1937 only. Previously it formed a part of Sriniketan which it still does geographically and in various other more intimate ways. Although it is only recently that it has developed into a full-fledged department, it has had a long and interesting history and a career which survived many vicissitudes.

Attempts at artistic crafts actually began at Santiniketan in the year 1922. We had just returned from a tour in Europe and America during which my wife had managed to get training in a few handicrafts, especially book-binding and pottery. About this time a huge tin-shed for workshops had been erected at Santiniketan from the gift made by a Bombay friend, but the authorities were at a loss to find some use for it. My wife, along with Andree Karpeles, seized a portion of this empty shed where they started making things with their own hands. A lacquer craftsman from Ilambazar was soon ferreted out from his village and added to this meagre staff of workers. A few girls from Kalabhavana used to drift into this workshop more from curiosity than genuine interest in crafts, which had long been relegated in our country to the status of an inferior art and artists were afraid of losing their caste by associating closely with those who were mere craftsmen. Even S. Nandalal Bose's vigorous attempts to change this attitude of mind has not entirely been successful amongst our artists and the distinction still persists between pure and applied arts. After struggling for a few years the workshop was removed to Sriniketan as the soil of Santiniketan did not prove congenial for handicrafts to flourish there. A notable contribution of this period was the improvement in the technique of lacquering. At Sriniketan the work was taken up successively by V. Masoji, P. Hariharan and Indusudha Ghosh in a small room on the groundfloor of the main building now given over to the Maternity Centre. Artistic bookbinding, Calico printing, Lacquer and Batik work continued to be the occupation of the handful of craftsmen employed. There was hardly any attempt to do things on a business scale or spread the movement to the villages. With the introduction of spinning and weaving the need for more space compelled migration to larger quarters. This time the help received from the Bengal Government Industry Department through Mr. Weston enabled us to put a roof over the ruins of the old railway workshop building and give it the grandiose name of the *Hall of Industries*. Until now the work in handicrafts was carried on under the name of the Vichitra Studio—but after its removal to the spacious quarters it became the Industries department of Sriniketan.

At this stage an incident helped to expand the activities of this newly established department. During a later visit to Europe ( in 1930 ) my wife and myself got ourselves interested in leather work and on our return to the asrama many students used to come

to us to learn this interesting work. Making of fancy articles from leather became the fashion. We took advantage of this and opened a regular workshop for leather goods under Santosh Kumar Bhanja Choudhury. Formerly every bit of leather goods ( except shoes, suitcases etc. ) sold in India used to be imported from abroad. As a result of our efforts in training a large number of young men and women this industry has spread throughout India, and already leather goods worth several lacs are being produced in this country. And it is very encouraging to note that the entire production is on a cottage industry basis, mostly made by individual workers in their homes. In the Silpa-Bhavana itself we are now producing about Rs. 16,000/-worth of leather goods annually.

The Hall of Industries opened with Weaving, Calico printing, Durrý making, Batik, Leatherwork, Lacquer work, Bookbinding, and Carpentry sections. Manindra Sen, in charge of the Weaving section, was sent to Japan to get further training with special reference to the organisation of small-scale cotton mills. He brought back with him 10 power looms and a complete set of accessory machines to feed this small number of looms.

We have sometimes been severely criticised for going in for this sort of factory method of production. But our object in installing a few power looms was certainly not to start the nucleus of a cotton mill at Sriniketan. It was an experiment to find out what could be called the smallest economic unit in a cotton mill. We cannot ignore altogether the need of machines in this age but much of the dire consequences of large-scale factory production could be eliminated if small units could be shown to yield reasonable profits. If that be so the cotton mill industry could be decentralized and every small town and even villages could afford to have their own little mill. The main difficulty had been that in Europe no accessory machines had been devised for small-scale production. The Japanese machines were not only suitable for this purpose but were also extremely cheap. The Government Industry Department who had grave doubts as to their efficiency lost no time in making copies of the designs as soon as they were put in working order. Owing to insufficient electrical power at Sriniketan and other difficulties we have not been able yet to test fully the possibilities of the power unit.

Various models of handlooms have been introduced at different times in the workshop. The Swedish looms that came as a gift from that country have made it possible to weave designs which otherwise could not have been woven on the ordinary looms. Our grateful thanks are due to Countess Hamilton for not only sending the looms but expert weavers along with them.

The Carpentry workshop has developed rapidly and is a very active section under the leadership of Santosh Kumar Roy. All the woodwork required for the construction of new buildings by the Visva-Bharati and every piece of furniture required by our various departments are now supplied by the Silpa-Bhavana. Besides these, there are enough orders from outside to keep about 45 carpenters and apprentices busy.

We started these enterprises on a modest scale. There were no trained workers to be had. Young men from the surrounding villages had to be induced to get training in the different handicrafts by the offer of free board and lodging. The first few years were therefore mainly devoted to giving technical education. But the pressure of

demand for our goods obliged us to extend the factory sheds and expand the business rapidly since 1938.

At the same time new experiments were started in paper making and pottery. During one of our journeys in Europe we had picked up a portable furnace from Germany and my wife had been trying for some time to devise new forms in pottery and testing different clays and glazes at her leisure moments at home. A few successful results tempted her to hand over the whole equipment to Silpa-Bhavana. Since then Santosh Bhanja Chowdhury after years' efforts spent in further experiments has been eminently successful in producing very pretty models of artistic earthenware.

The increase in the production of goods forced our attention to the need of a properly organised sales department. Marketing of hand-made articles is a difficult problem. An emporium at Calcutta was opened and several agencies secured in Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Darjeeling and other cities for the sale of our goods. Figures for the year ending December 1940 are gratifying. I give below a table of comparative figures indicating the total sales of the Silpa-Bhavana products during the last three years :—

● PRODUCTION				SALES		
Section	1938	1939	1940	1938	1939	1940
Textile	Rs. 13001	Rs. 13992	Rs. 15800	Rs. 9757	Rs. 11246	Rs. 18500
Crafts	„ 14075	„ 15078	„ 16000	„ 11033	„ 13015	„ 14000
Carpentry	„ 22183	„ 18563	„ 14500	„ 17418	„ 14009	„ 14000
Total—	Rs. 49259	Rs. 47634	Rs. 46300	Rs. 38209	Rs. 38271	Rs. 41500

Although the above figures are impressive it will be unfair to emphasize the business side only of the Silpabhavana. The aims and objects of this department are to encourage and to promote cottage industries in this district by :—

( 1 ) Carrying on experiments in such cottage industries as may be of economic value.  
 ( 2 ) To establish workshops on a small scale with such industries as have been demonstrated to be successful under local conditions and run them on business lines.

( 3 ) To take young men from the rural areas of Birbhum as apprentices in the workshops and give them such vocational training that they can earn independently decent living from their handicrafts.

( 4 ) To follow up these trained artisans when they leave the institution and help them to set up their business at home by advancing sufficient capital to purchase necessary equipment, provide raw materials and help in disposing of the finished products by organising a central depot and sales department.

( 5 ) To make arrangements for the training of the students of Siksha-Satra and Siksha-Charcha-Bhavana.

( 6 ) To provide a course of training in cottage industries to a few students from outside the district and award diplomas and certificates to such students after they have qualified for them.

(7) To encourage the development of cottage industries by awarding scholarships and stipends to deserving students.

(8) To organise selling agencies for the marketing of goods produced in the workshops at Sriniketan as well as those produced in the villages under our supervision, and also to organise and maintain a wholesale and retail shop in Calcutta for the purpose, if necessary.

We can now fairly claim that most of the above objects have been realised to a large extent. We have by this time trained hundreds of youngmen in handicrafts and have thus been able to provide them with remunerative work. In the Silpa-bhavana itself there are about 159 workers, drawn from every community and caste and mostly from our intensive area. But there is quite a number of persons working in their homes, whom we provide with raw materials and from whom we purchase in cash all the finished goods which they can produce. The following table gives the total number of workers and apprentices working at Silpa-Bhavana as well as in the villages:—

Section	1939	1940	1941
Textile	92	99	108
Crafts	69	68	75
Carpentry	45	50	46
Total—	206	217	229

If the total annual production of the Silpa-Bhavana is taken to be valued at Rs. 46,000/- at least Rs. 25,000/- goes to improve the economic condition of the village artisans.

It takes a pretty long time to establish a local industry. We need not be too anxious to get results nor pessimistic about the future. Once we can establish the industry on a business basis, the other developments will follow in the natural course. Of course we should never lose sight of the ultimate object of all our endeavours at Sriniketan. I cannot but visualize Silpa-Bhavana as the central hive built up and fed by an army of busy craftsmen all over the district.

### WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of February.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42'E.

Height above M. S. L.-19

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity past 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Feb. 41.	No. of Rainy days
Jan. 1940	80°019"	62·7°F	73%	8 M.P.H.	4 M.P.H.	6 M. P. H.	89°F	52°F	1·18"	1·18"	1·18"	1
Feb. 1941	80°046"	65·1°F	64%	8 M.P.H.	8 M.P.H.	8 M. P. H.	94°F	58°F	Trace	Nil	0·22"	Nil

( Continued from page 66 )

The Maternity Centre attached to the Sriniketan Hospital has been formally opened. A Lady Health Visitor has taken charge of the centre.

...

We understand that installation work has been taken up in right earnest by the Santiniketan Electric Supply Company and that the current will be made available at an early date.

...

In addition to the usual programme of distribution of doles to distressed people and organisation of village industries, (like paddy-husking and mat-making), sinking of wells in places suffering from water scarcity has been taken up during this month.

With the advent of summer the tanks are rapidly drying up and the problem of saving the cattle is becoming acute, specially as the small stock of fodder yielded by the last harvest is being exhausted. Arrangements have been completed for starting a cattle concentration camp at Ballabhpur with the help of the Marwari Relief Society and a promised donation from the Gogras Gajivdan Mandal of Bombay. It is also in contemplation to start a cattle feeding centre at Kankali on the Kopai river. Both these places are in the heart of the distressed area. The members and sympathisers of the Visva-Bharati are once again requested to contribute generously to the funds opened by us for relief of distress.

...

Demonstration of physical feats and exercises was given by students of the Buchanan Physical Training School of Calcutta, who came on a day's visit on March 1.

...

We have received the sum of Rs. 500, being the first instalment of a donation, from the Dowager Maharani Sucharu Devi

of Mayurbhanj. According to the donor's instructions the entire sum will be spent in laying out a hard court for Tennis for the senior girls of the Sree-Bhavana. Though we have been able to provide for quite a number of suitable games for our girl-students, Tennis has not been one of them. The donor has earned our gratitude by thus enabling us to remove a long-felt need.

...

The Santiniketan Sammelani has invited the well-known litterateur of Gujarat ( Kathiawar ), Sri Jhaverchand Meghani to deliver a series of lectures on Gujarati Folk Literature in which subject he has specialized for many years. He is expected to arrive at Santiniketan on March 12 and will stay for about a week. Our hearty welcome to him.

...

A novel way of enlisting support for the Relief Fund of China was adopted by T. P. Gee—a inmate of the Cheena Bhavana. He has collected a moderate sum of money by accepting voluntary contribution by way of fees for the reading of palms from some teachers and students of Santiniketan. The money has been forwarded to China.

...

An exhibition of the works of the late Durga Roy was arranged in the Havell Hall during the last month.

Miss A. S. Hellier, principal of the Gnanodhaya Training School, Madras, visited Santiniketan from February 24-27 and held an exhibition in Havell Hall of specimens of children's drawings and paintings from many different countries, including England, America, Russia, Japan, China and India. Miss Hellier also gave a talk on the 26th in which she commented on the exhibits and discussed the principles of teaching art to children. The exhibits painted by children under 8 years old were especially popular.



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume IX

APRIL, 1941

Number X

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## In Memoriam.

Why does the moth love madly the Light ?

Why does the seeker of truth ascend the Cross with avid agility ?

Ask the moth why he behaves thus and he will answer, "Because only in burning for the Light there is the real Zest of life."

Sacrificing the wealth of the world the servants of Humanity become pilgrim-pariahs of the open road.

Ask them why they do so and they will tell you, "For, in our heart there dwells the love of the Lord."

Verily, to burn in love for the Light of Truth is the law of the Spirit.

Gurdial Mallik.

---

The above is an English translation by the author himself of his original Hindusthani poem written in memory of the late Deenabandhu C F. Andrews who was called to his eternal rest on April 5, 1940.—Ed.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

For sometime past there has been noticed an unfortunate set-back in Gurudeva's health. It is now nearly a month that he has mostly been confined to his rooms. He seems to have grown considerably weaker, his weakness being aggravated by the sultry weather now prevailing. His physicians, however, are strongly of opinion that to remove him to the hills in the present condition of his health will mean imposition of undesirable strain. The doctors are in constant consultation and every effort is being made to give him as much relief as possible. It is needless to add that in the present state of his health it is not possible for him to meet visitors or accept any public engagements.

...

We will celebrate the 80th birthday of Gurudeva on the first day of the Bengali New Year (April 14). In view of the delicate condition of Gurudeva's health the ceremony will be observed in as quiet a way as possible. In order to fittingly commemorate the occasion the Samsad has sanctioned a proposal for endowing a Rabindra Readership for Bengali Literature in Santiniketan and is also making arrangements for mechanical recording of the authentic tunes of Gurudeva's songs. The Publishing Department has undertaken to bring out a series of English translations of Gurudeva's works. English translation of Gurudeva's latest autobiography entitled 'My Boyhood Days' published as a separate volume will be the first of the series.

...

The Visva-Bharati Quarterly is bringing out a special Birthday Number in May next. The Number will be exclusively devoted to Gurudeva's life and works and will

contain a chronological summary of the eighty years of Gurudeva's life, a detailed bibliography of his writings—both Bengali and English, a bibliography of books written on him and several learned articles covering almost every aspect of his literary and other achievements written by distinguished litterateurs and scholars. The Number will also contain photographs of Gurudeva at various stages of his life.

...

On the occasion of the first anniversary of the death of Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews, which fell on April 5, 1941, Pandit Kshitimohan Sen conducted divine service in the morning. In the course of his sermon he dwelt on the several aspects of the life of the departed. In the evening a meeting was held in Cheena-Bhavana when several speakers paid their tributes of love to the Deenabandhu as a good Christian, as an inmate of Santiniketan, as a lover of India and as an apostle of humanism.

...

Mahatma Gandhi has issued the following appeal to the Press :—

"The first anniversary of Deenabandhu's death will be soon upon us. I am too weak and too occupied to travel about for collections. What is, however, tantalising is the fact that the collection have not been coming promptly and spontaneously. Charlie Andrews was everybody's friend in need. He made no distinction between the high and the poor or Christians and non-Christians or Englishmen and others. He ungrudgingly assisted all who were in need of his help. He slaved night and day for humanity. He found his home and self expression in Santiniketan. Dr. Rabindra-

( Continued on page 77 )

## A Letter

Durban,  
Feb. 15.\*

My Dearest Gurudev,

I have entered my fiftieth year and surely the time has come for some rest after all this journeying to and fro over the earth. Body and spirit alike are tired, and each day the tired feeling seems to increase. It seems to me that I am giving way weakly to the besetting evil of the age—that of rush and hurry and haste—as though life's problems were to be settled in a whirlwind. You have chosen the better part : that is why your own life has been so fruitful.

Sometimes I feel that I have never had any except second and third rate powers : and if that is so, perhaps this squandering does not matter : one had just to give away what one had with both hands. But at other times, I feel certain that, if only I had given time to quiet and peace and prayer and meditation, I might have done something that would have been effective. The truth is, that the fever of activity had taken possession of me from my very boyhood, in our feverish English land of work without play ; and though, in you, I have seen the higher ideal and the greater work,—the work which one can go on doing, as the *'Isha Upanishat'* says 'for a hundred years',—the old strong drag of the past years was against me and the call of the new feverish life which has captured India itself was too pressing, and I have given way. I do not think this is quite all,—there has been a *real* call to service and it has been at a great cost. But I have had great misgivings, whether there may not have been a higher call, all the while, pointing to a more fruitful life of quiet, rather than this constant, ceaseless running to and fro over the earth. Yet, God alone knows how ardently I wished to live that other life ! I do not think I have faced any thing harder than this last decision about going away : and if I had refused the call and stayed with you,—could I really have forgiven myself ? Would not the thought of some shameful neglect have stung me ? And the hardest part of all was,—that I could not by any possibility see you again before I started. I longed for this with an inexpressible longing and yet I feared it also. I think these inward struggles with one's self, when life can ( if one likes ) be completely self-directed, and there is no hindrance to one's own will if one only wishes to use it—I think that these are the greatest times of suffering ! And when the mind itself is tired and cannot face the struggle of a right decision, the suffering is greatest of all.—I have just been through such another struggle, and it has tired and tired me out. For it would have been quite easy now, on the ground of health, to have antedated my departure, and to have come by the next steamer,—the *Karapara*,—which sails on Feb. 26. And many people here have been telling me that I should do so. But it would be to leave this work, such as it is, unfinished. And I *know* you yourself would tell me not to do this. And so I have got to start on a journey, which I dread, of three days and three whole nights in the train to get to

---

\* Andrews was born on February 12, 1871. The letter was written in 1920.—*Ed.*

Capetown, and after that there will be three days and three nights on the way back. And I wonder if it is really worth while : and I say to myself that it is only want of courage of decision that makes me take this extra journey and that if only I could make up my mind, I could sail by the next boat—and so the struggle goes on !—It is all this weakness of mental and physical health. The body has such a tremendous hold over the mind : it can even make black into white and white into black, for the time being. But the spirit ( which is beyond both the mind and the body ) must somehow say the final word and gain the victory. And now that the struggle is almost over and I have decided to stick to what I had intended and carry it through to the very end, I am sure that it is right. You told me in a letter, long years ago, to look to God and not to any human friend, and that has been so true. I have wished for your help, your advice, your guidance, more than I can ever possibly express,—and in a most true way I have received it. But this very loneliness, which has been so oppressive, has made me rely more upon Him and I have heard His voice. What you told me has come true. This is what Willie has been learning also and finding in his own way. And we have learnt it and found it from our love to you. But that love itself clings so hard to the human side and that means such infinite suffering.

And you have suffered too, dearest Gurudev, because you have loved us both, and we have both been absent from you, and you have silently borne it and have not said 'no' to it, when a single word from you would have called us both to your side, And, Gurudev, who knows better than I how much you have suffered in the intense loneliness of your work, in the knowledge that it has not been given you to see the man you expected coming forward to sustain it. I can understand something of what it has meant to you to find that Nandalal\* could not stay. I know well what a shock that too has been to you as well as my own going away.

But, dearest, dearest, Gurudev I am quite, quite certain that from my side the shocks are over. The work I was called to do has been done, and the new stage of my life has now been entered,—the *vanaprastha* stage, in which I can give myself to that greater and higher work in the ashram itself. That must be now my life and my true life's work, and I can do no other. And if God spares my life, through all these journeys and trials, and brings me safely back to you, there shall be no more wandering after this and no more shocks in future. I feel still that I am being guided step by step, and this is now my own inner peace, in the midst of this great bodily weakness.

With my deepest love and devotion

Charlie.

---

\* For about two years ( 1920-22 ) Nandalal Bose helped the Indian Society of Oriental Arts in Calcutta. He rejoined Santiniketan in 1928.—*Ed.*

( Continued from page 74 )

nath Tagore was his 'Guru' and friend. Living he was the chief collector of funds for Santiniketan. No more fitting memorial could, therefore, be conceived than that his home should never be in want and that it should have additional funds for expansion. Indeed, the Gurudev himself should command all the monetary help he needs. He has brought lustre to India. Many men have derived signal assistance from him and his institution. Their children are receiving instruction in Santiniketan. His art decorates many an Indian home. His poetry, his novels, plays and his art enrich the minds of thousands of boys and girls, men and women.

It is a problem why these two precious names have not brought forth spontaneous response. Why should there be special appeals made on behalf of a memorial which is its own compelling recommendation. A spontaneous response will delight Deenabandhu's spirit and put new life into Rabindranath Tagore. What answer have students and teachers, friends of labour and lovers of art to make? Among them they can produce the paltry five lacs in a day. Will they produce the amount before the 5th April, the day on which Deenabandhu, that true friend of the poor, took sleep from which he never awoke."

...

Mr. W. W. Wood, Principal of the Delhi Polytechnic arrived here on a short visit towards the last week of March. Mr. Wood made a detailed study of the various departments of The Visva-Bharati and made the following observations :—

My main purpose in asking Mr. R. N. Tagore to allow me to visit Sriniketan and Santiniketan was in order to fulfil a long-felt desire to see what was being done there in

the fine and applied arts. There are so many artistic crafts in India which are rapidly becoming extinct through lack of patronage and encouragement and I felt that if an attempt was being made anywhere to preserve them it would be in the asrama of Rabindranath Tagore.

The atmosphere of the asrama is at first difficult to convey. There is a mental and spiritual freedom, a sense of personal independence which is quickly shared by the most casual visitor. The experimental aspect reminded me a good deal of Dartington Hall, and its associations with music, dancing and the drama enhance the similarity.

The creative spirit in drawing and tempera reaches a very high standard under the inspired direction of Nandalal Bose. I saw, too, experiments in reviving decorative brass work under a craftsman from a neighbouring village, where it is indigenous. At Sriniketan the leather work and weaving reached a high standard in original design and execution, due regard being paid to traditional Indian, and particularly Bengal motifs. Bookbinding was simple and good; pottery was tentative, experimental work being restricted by the deficiencies of the local clay. A most useful piece of collaboration between the institution and the villages, is the making of cane chairs and stools in the villages, which are then sent in to be upholstered with beautifully designed leather seats. In the museum I saw a collection of dolls from all over the world. Toy-making is a field which should be ploughed. It is a village craft with, I consider, great possibilities. When I have had time to collect my thoughts I shall hope to have another opportunity of contributing to the Bulletin.

...

The Patha-Bhavana has recently published two Bengali Readers for the children of Classes IV and V. As is well-known Gurudeva had himself written Bengali Readers for the use of school children in Bengal. These two Readers entitled সহস্রপাঠ—তৃতীয় ভাগ and পাঠপ্রচয়—প্রথম ভাগ have been written to fill in the gaps and so complete the series of suitable Bengali textbooks for children. The two latest Readers contain many poems and writings of Gurudeva besides articles and stories written by the members of the staff at Santiniketan.

...

A Bengali book on Food and Nutrition entitled আহাৰ ও আহাৰ written by Dr. Pasupati Bhattacharya has been published in the Loka-Siksha Series of the Visva-Bharati.

...

Among the routine activities of the last month the following may be mentioned :—

Gandhi Day which came off on March 10 and Basantotsava on the Dolpurnima Day. Performance of *Natir Puja* and *Basanta* were given on March 18 and 19 respectively. The latter was broadcasted by the Calcutta Station of the All India Radio.

...

Our institution will remain closed for the Summer Vacation from April 24 to July 2 both days inclusive.

...

It is expected that the New Science

Laboratory will be formally opened on Baisakh 1.

...

The students of the two departments of Siksha-Satra and Siksha-Charcha went on educational trips during the last month. The former party under Tarak Chandra Dhar went to Calcutta and the latter under Gouridas Mallik went on a North India tour visiting various places of historic interest. Both the departments closed down earlier for their summer vacation owing to inadequate supply of water in Sriniketan.

...

We are glad to know that the Government of India have decided to make a grant of Rs. 25,000/- ( Rupees Twentyfive thousand only ) to the Visva-Bharati in 1941-42, 'in recognition of the contribution it is making to Indian Culture'. We are also glad that the Bengal Government have now released the grant of Rs. 25,000/- which was sanctioned and provided for in their last year's budget.

...

A separate body under the name of Visva-Bharati Economic Research Board ( VER ) has been organised in Calcutta. Its function will be to conduct economic research at Sriniketan and to investigate problems of all-Bengal or all-India interest. Dr. Sudhir Sen is the Director of the Board. A number of economic bulletins will be prepared in the course of the next few months and will be published on behalf of VER.

### OBITUARY

We regret to announce the death of Jyotish Chandra Mukherjee—Manager, Santiniketan Guesthouse. He passed away peacefully on April 4, 1941 after a brief illness. A popular figure in the asrama his death will leave behind him a gap which will remain ever unfilled. We convey our heartfelt condolence to the relatives and friends of the deceased. May his soul rest in peace.

During the three months of February, March and April a series of extension lectures were given under the auspices of the Vidya-Bhavana. The following is a complete list of the lectures.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Lecturer</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Lecture</i>
Spirit of Indian Philosophy. ( in English )	P. B. Abikari	Values & Preferences. ( in English )	P. B. Adhikari
Arabia in Ancient Days and its relations with the outer world. ( in English )	F. M. Asiri	The earliest Jain texts of Bengal. ( in Bengali )	K. M. Sen
What the Muslims believe the Quran to be. ( in English )	Md. Adamuddin	Acting, Music & Dance in Ancient India. ( in Hindi )	H. P. Dwivedi
Jainism in Ancient Bengal. ( in Bengali )	K. M. Sen	Collections & Editions of the Quran. ( in English )	Md. Adamuddin
Art of Recreation in Ancient India. ( in Hindi )	H. P. Dwivedi	Relations of Arabia with India and the coming of the Prophet. ( in English )	F. M. Asiri
The Sufi Mysticism. ( in English )	Bikramjit Hasrat	Some experiences of the Sindh Sufis. ( in English )	G. D. Mallik
Bulle-Shah, the Mystic Saint of the Punjab. ( in English )	G. D. Mallik	Philosophical Schools of Islamic thought. ( in English )	Bikramjit Hasrat
Islamic Civilization. ( in English )	F. Vreede.	Indian approach to literary criticism ( in Bengali )	N. Chakravarty
Indian Culture. ( in English )	do.	Mahayana Buddhism. ( in English )	Sujit Mukherjee

### WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of March.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42'E.

Height above M. S. L.-191 ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity past 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Feb. 41.	No. of Rainy days
Mar. 1940	29°876"	71°6°F	78%	4 M.P.H.	5 M.P.H.	14 M. P. H.	99°F	59°F	1.76"	0.60"	2.89"	5
Mar. 1941	29°868"	80°2°F	60%	4 M.P.H.	6 M.P.H.	11 M. P. H.	109°F	56°F	Nil	Nil	0.22"	Nil



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume IX

MAY, 1941

Number XI



A recent photograph of Gurudeva



## Crisis in Civilization

Today I complete eighty years of my life. As I look back on the vast stretch of years that lie behind me and see in clear perspective the history of my early development, I am struck by the change that has taken place both in my own attitude and in the psychology of my countrymen—a change that carries within it a cause of profound tragedy.

Our direct contact with the larger world of men was linked up with the contemporary history of the English people whom we came to know in those earlier days. It was mainly through their mighty literature that we formed our ideas with regard to these newcomers to our Indian shores. In those days the type of learning that was served out to us was neither plentiful nor diverse, nor was the spirit of scientific enquiry very much in evidence. Thus their scope being strictly limited, the educated of those days had recourse to English language and literature. Their days and nights were eloquent with the stately declamations of Burke, with Macaulay's long-rolling sentences; discussions centred upon Shakespeare's drama and Byron's poetry and above all upon the large-hearted liberalism of the nineteenth-century English politics.

At the time though tentative attempts were being made to gain our national independence, at heart we had not lost faith in the generosity of the English race. This belief was so firmly rooted in the sentiment of our leaders as to lead them to hope that the victor would of his own grace pave the path of freedom for the vanquished. This belief was based upon the fact that England at the time provided a shelter to all those who had to flee from persecution in their own country. Political martyrs who had suffered for the honour of their people were accorded unreserved welcome at the hands of the English. I was impressed by this evidence of liberal humanity in the character of the English and thus I was led to set them on the pedestal of my highest respect. This generosity in their national character had not yet been vitiated by Imperialist pride. About this time, as a boy in England, I had the opportunity of listening to the speeches of John Bright, both in and outside Parliament. The large-hearted, radical liberalism of those speeches, overflowing all narrow national bounds, had made so deep an impression on my mind that something of it lingers even today, even in these days of graceless disillusionment.

Certainly that spirit of abject dependence upon the charity of our rulers was no matter for pride. What was remarkable, however, was the wholehearted way in which we gave our recognition to human greatness even when it revealed itself in the foreigner. The best and noblest gifts of humanity cannot be the monopoly of a particular race or country; its scope may not be limited nor may it be regarded as the miser's hoard buried underground. That is why English literature which nourished our minds in the past, does even now convey its deep resonance to the recesses of our heart.

---

The above is the only authorised translation of the original Bengali address by Gurudeva entitled *সভাতার সংকট* written on the occasion of the birthday celebrations at Santiniketan. It has been revised by Gurudeva himself—Ed.

It is difficult to find a suitable Bengali equivalent for the English word "civilization". That phase of civilization with which we were familiar in this country has been called by Manu "*Sadachar*" ( *lit.* proper conduct ), that is, the conduct prescribed by the tradition of the race. Narrow in themselves these time-honoured social conventions originated and held good in a circumscribed geographical area, in that strip of land, Brahmavarta by name, bound on either side by the rivers Saraswati and Drisadvati. That is how a pharisaic formalism gradually got the upper hand of free thought and the ideal of 'proper conduct' which Manu found established in Brahmavarta steadily degenerated into socialized tyranny.

During my boyhood days the attitude of the cultured and educated section of Bengal, nurtured on English learning, was charged with a feeling of revolt against these rigid regulations of society. A perusal of what Rajnarain Bose has written describing the ways of the educated gentry of those days will amply bear out what I have said just now. In place of these set codes of conduct we accepted the ideal of "civilization" as represented by the English term.

In our own family this change of spirit was welcomed for the sake of its sheer rational and moral force and its influence was felt in every sphere of our life. Born in that atmosphere, which was moreover coloured by our intuitive bias for literature, I naturally set the English on the throne of my heart. Thus passed the first chapters of my life. Then came the parting of ways accompanied with a painful feeling of disillusion when I began increasingly to discover how easily those who accepted the highest truths of civilization disowned them with impunity whenever questions of national self-interest were involved.

There came a time when perforce I had to snatch myself away from the mere appreciation of literature. As I emerged into the stark light of bare facts, the sight of the dire poverty of the Indian masses rent my heart. Rudely shaken out of my dreams, I began to realise that perhaps in no other modern state was there such hopeless dearth of the most elementary needs of existence. And yet it was this country whose resources had fed for so long the wealth and magnificence of the British people. While I was lost in the contemplation of the great world of civilization, I could never have remotely imagined that the great ideals of humanity would end in such ruthless travesty. But today a glaring example of it stares me in the face in the utter and contemptuous indifference of a so-called civilized race to the well-being of crores of Indian people.

That mastery over the machine, by which the British have consolidated their sovereignty over their vast Empire, has been kept a sealed book, to which due access has been denied to this helpless country. And all the time before our very eyes Japan has been transforming herself into a mighty and prosperous nation. I have seen with my own eyes the admirable use to which Japan has put in her own country the fruits of this progress. I have also been privileged to witness, while in Moscow, the unsparing energy with which Russia has tried to fight disease and illiteracy, and has succeeded in steadily liquidating ignorance and poverty, wiping off the humiliation from the face of a vast continent. Her civilization is free from all invidious distinction between one class and

another, between one sect and another. The rapid and astounding progress achieved by her made me happy and jealous at the same time. One aspect of the Soviet administration which particularly pleased me was that it provided no scope for unseemly conflict of religious difference nor set one community against another by unbalanced distribution of political favours. That I consider a truly civilized administration which impartially serves the common interests of the people.

While other imperialist powers sacrifice the welfare of the subject races to their own national greed, in the U.S.S. R. I found a genuine attempt being made to harmonise the interests of the various nationalities that are scattered over its vast area. I saw peoples and tribes, who, only the other day, were nomadic savages being encouraged and indeed trained, to avail themselves freely of the benefits of civilization. Enormous sums are being spent on their education to expedite the process. When I see elsewhere some two hundred nationalities—which only a few years ago were at vastly different stages of development—marching ahead in peaceful progress and amity, and when I look about my own country and see a very highly evolved and intellectual people drifting into the disorder of barbarism, I cannot help contrasting the two systems of governments, one based on co-operation, the other on exploitation, which have made such contrary conditions possible.

I have also seen Iran, newly awakened to a sense of national self-sufficiency, attempting to fulfil her own destiny freed from the deadly grinding-stones of two European powers. During my recent visit to that country I discovered to my delight that Zoroastrians who once suffered from the fanatical hatred of the major community and whose rights had been curtailed by the ruling power, were now free from this age-long repression, and that civilized life had established itself in the happy land. It is significant that Iran's good fortune dates from the day when she finally disentangled herself from the meshes of European diplomacy. With all my heart I wish Iran well.

Turning to the neighbouring kingdom of Afghanistan I find that though there is much room for improvement in the field of education and social development, yet she is fortunate in that she can look forward to unending progress ; for none of the European powers, boastful of their civilization, has yet succeeded in overwhelming and crushing her possibilities.

Thus while these other countries were marching ahead, India, smothered under the dead weight of British administration, lay static in her utter helplessness. Another great and ancient civilization for whose recent tragic history the British cannot disclaim responsibility, is China. To serve their own national profit the British first doped her people with opium and then appropriated a portion of her territory. As the world was about to forget the memory of this outrage, we were painfully surprised by another event. While Japan was quietly devouring North China, her act of wanton aggression was ignored as a minor incident by the veterans of British diplomacy. We have also witnessed from this distance how actively the British statesmen acquiesced in the destruction of the Spanish Republic.

On the other hand, we also noted with admiration how a band of valiant Englishmen

laid down their lives for Spain. Even though the English had not aroused themselves sufficiently to their sense of responsibility towards China in the Far East, in their own immediate neighbourhood they did not hesitate to sacrifice themselves to the cause of freedom. Such acts of heroism reminded me over again of the true English spirit to which in those early days I had given my full faith, and made me wonder how imperialist greed could bring about so ugly a transformation in the character of so great a race.

Such is the tragic tale of the gradual loss of my faith in the claims of the European nations to civilization. In India the misfortune of being governed by a foreign race is daily brought home to us not only in the callous neglect of such minimum necessities of life as adequate provision for food, clothing, educational and medical facilities for the people, but in an even unhappier form in the way the people have been divided among themselves. The pity of it is that the blame is laid at the door of our own society. So frightful a culmination of the history of our people would never have been possible, but for the encouragement it has received from secret influences emanating from high places.

One cannot believe that Indians are in any way inferior to the Japanese in intellectual capacity. The most effective difference between these two eastern peoples is that whereas India lies at the mercy of the British, Japan has been spared the shadow of alien domination. We know what we have been deprived of. That which was truly best in their own civilizations the upholding of the dignity of human relationship, has no place in the British administration of this country. If in its place they have established, with baton in hand, a reign of "law and order", in other words a policeman's rule, such mockery of civilization can claim no respect from us. It is the mission of civilization to bring unity among people and establish peace and harmony. But in unfortunate India the social fabric is being rent into shreds by unseemly outbursts of hooliganism daily growing in intensity, right under the very aegis of "law and order". In India, so long as no personal injury is inflicted upon any member of the ruling race, this barbarism seems to be assured of perpetuity, making us ashamed to live under such an administration.

And yet my good fortune has often brought me into close contact with really large-hearted Englishmen. Without the slightest hesitation I may say that the nobility of their character was without parallel—in no country or community have I come across such greatness of soul. Such examples would not allow me wholly to lose faith in the race which produced them. I had the rare blessing of having Andrews—a real Englishman, a real Christian and a true man—for a very close friend. Today in the perspective of death his unselfish and courageous magnanimity shines all the brighter. The whole of India remains indebted to him for innumerable acts of love and devotion. But personally speaking, I am especially beholden to him because he helped me to retain in my old age that feeling of respect for the English race with which in the past I was inspired by their literature and which I was about to lose completely. I count such Englishmen as Andrews not only as my personal and intimate friends but as friends of the whole human race. To have known them has been to me a treasured privilege. It is my belief that such Englishmen will save British honour from shipwreck. At any rate if I had not known them, my despair at the prospect of western civilization would be unrelieved.

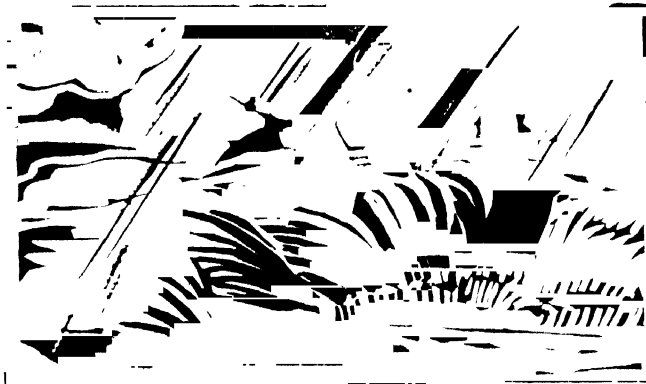
In the meanwhile the demon of barbarity has given up all pretence and has emerged with unconcealed fangs, ready to tear up humanity in an orgy of devastation. From one end of the world to the other the poisonous fumes of hatred darken the atmosphere. The spirit of violence which perhaps lay dormant in the psychology of the West, has at last roused itself and desecrates the spirit of Man.

The wheels of Fate will some day compel the English to give up their Indian empire. But what kind of India will they leave behind, what stark misery ? When the stream of their centuries' administration runs dry at last, what a waste of mud and filth they will leave behind them ! I had at one time believed that the springs of civilization would issue out of the heart of Europe. But today when I am about to quit the world that faith has gone bankrupt altogether.

As I look around I see the crumbling ruins of a proud civilization strewn like a vast heap of futility. And yet I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in Man. I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter in his history after the cataclysm is over and the atmosphere rendered clean with the spirit of service and sacrifice. Perhaps that dawn will come from this horizon, from the East where the sun rises. A day will come when unvanquished Man will retrace his path of conquest, despite all barriers, to win back his lost human heritage.

Today we witness the perils which attend on the insolence of might ; one day shall be borne out the full truth of what the sages have proclaimed :

"By unrighteousness man prospers, gains what appears desirable, conquers enemies, but perishes at the root."





## A Song

The Great One comes,  
sending shivers across the dust of the Earth.

In the heavens sound the trumpet,  
in the world of man the drums of victory are beaten,  
the hour has arrived for the Great Birth.

To-day the gates of night's fortress  
crumble into dust—  
On the crest of awakening dawn  
assurance of new life  
proclaims "Fear Not."  
The great sky resounds with paeans of victory  
to the Coming of Man.

The above is translated by Dr. Amiya Chakravarty from the original Bengali song specially composed by Gurudeva and sung at the Naba-Barsha Mandir service. The first line of the song is as follows :—ঐ মহামানব আসে । The translation has been revised by Gurudeva himself—*Ed.*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

We celebrated the eightieth birthday of Gurudeva as usual on the first day of the Bengali New Year ( April 14 ). The ceremony was a quiet and impressive one. At the outset girl students came in a procession carrying birthday gifts and after these were laid at his feet, Gurudeva was garlanded and auspicious sandalwood paste was put on his forehead. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen then chanted appropriate Vedic hymns wishing that Gurudeva may live through 'a hundred autumns'. Gurudeva addressed the inmates of the asrama in the following words:

You have brought me your gifts of love and in return you have my blessings. My best wishes and prayers for your well-being have gone out to you in a perpetual stream for all these days. Let them attend on you anew on this special occasion.

We acquire friends and relatives by dint of our birth and that being what it is, reflects no credit on us personally. And then as we proceed on our journey of life we pick and collect our companions of the road very much by our own individual endeavour. It is to me a source of unending wonder how strangers are made into friends and how in their love and devotion they convey the blessing of merciful providence.

While in my boyhood days I moved in the limited circles of the family in which I was born I never dreamt that a day would come when I should be surrounded by so many loving hearts. You are not my rela-

tives in the sense which the term usually signifies, and that is why I so dearly prize the offer of love that you have brought me. I accept it with the deepest gratitude.

I have been singularly fortunate in my friends who have come to me from far and near. I do not know how far I am worthy of the affection and service they have chosen to offer me. I can only bow down to Him who out of His boundless love has bestowed on me this great gift of friendship.

After this Pandit Kshitimohan Sen read out the Bengali address entitled স্বভ্যতার সংকট written by Gurudeva on the occasion of the birthday celebrations. The only authorised English translation of the address duly revised by Gurudeva himself will be found elsewhere in this issue of the *News*.

Then came a music and dance performance which was followed by a sumptuous dinner.

Gurudeva was present all through the celebrations proper. Dressed in his ceremonial robe of yellow he looked tired but happy as he smilingly acknowledged the felicitations accorded to him.

Besides the inmates of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, many members of the Samsad participated in the function.

Numerous messages of congratulation have been received by Gurudeva from friends far and near. We have great pleasure in quoting those from Mahatma Gandhi and Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek together with Gurudeva's reply.

...

## Birthday Messages

Gurudeva received the following message from mahatma Gandhi :—

Four score not enough. May you finish five. Love.

Gurudeva's reply was as follows :—

Thanks message but four score is impertinence, five score intolerable.

...

Message cabled by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek.

Congratulations for your birthday on the fourteenth of this month. At this time while entire eastern hemisphere is shaken by cannons and bombs the people of the world feel evermore the greatness of your voice of love, peace, freedom and righteousness. China has been struggling in defence of the civilization of East Asia and for that I wish all the more to congratulate you for the longevity of your life the heroic voice of which shall keep sounding like a bell to all over the world the spiritual significance of eastern civilization.

Gurudeva's letter in reply :—

Dear and esteemed Friend,

It was with very great pleasure and deep gratitude that I read your message of congratulation on my birthday, conveying your own good wishes and those of the Chinese people. Your affectionate remembrance of me was one of the special joys of the day, and I send my heartfelt thanks for your gracious words of goodwill to you and the great nation you represent.

The celebration of my birthday at Santiniketan is held on Bengal's New Year's Day which fell on April 14th. Hence it is also a time for a review of the past and a forward looking hope for the future. The brave and patient people of China and their fortitude in suffering are constantly in my thoughts and I am happy in the opportunity to send them not only my thanks but a New Year's greeting also. May their achievements in the coming year be great in all that makes for noble nationhood, and may the labours of their devoted leaders bear rich fruit. May the innocent multitudes be spared from dire calamity to build their lives in peace. With this prayer I renew my thanks to you for your gracious message.

In a letter Dr. Najib U. Khan, President, The Indian Students' Association, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, writes as follows—

C. F. Andrews was not born at Carlisle, but at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at 14, Brunel Terrace, Westgate. This statement is not only based on C. F. A's verbal statements at several public meetings on his visits to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, but also on the copy of his birth certificate which I have obtained from the District Registrar of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This mistake which has been committed by most of C. F. A's biographers must be corrected or Newcastle will be deprived of its only saint of the present century.

...

Since the recent appeal issued by Mahatma Gandhi we are gratified to note the increasing response accorded to the work of collection for the Andrews Memorial Fund. In this connection we may mention the generous donation of Rs. 10,000/- received from Seth G. D. Birla. The collections at Santiniketan amount to Rs. 19,260/- up to date.

...

We are thankful to Mr. S. C. Mitter, Director of the Department of Industries, Government of Bengal who has been instrumental in securing a Capital Grant of Rs. 20,000/- to the Silpa-Bhavana, Sriniketan, for the current financial year. Since the Sriniketan-Sachiva took personal charge of the Department a new impetus has been received and a considerable increase in its activities has been observed. Recently a fresh section has been added for Fruit-preservation and Canning—an industry with immense possibilities. The Silpa-Bhavana building is shortly going to be remodelled in order to ensure proper expansion and efficient production. Of late the products of the Silpa-Bhavana have been securing a ready market in Calcutta and elsewhere. In order to cope with the increasing volume of orders and larger demand from the public, our Sales Department in Calcutta has had to move from its present inadequate accommodation at 210 Cornwallis Street to more commodious premises as from the month of May. The present address of the Shop is 36, Dhurum-tollah, Calcutta.

...

### WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of April.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42'E.

Height above M. S. L.-191 ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity past 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Mar. 31.	No. of Rainy days
April. 1940	29.887"	81.2°F	52%	4 M.P.H.	8 M.P.H.	12 M. P. H.	112°F	67°F	0.82"	0.28"	8.21"	2
April. 1941	29.757"	84.6°F	64%	6 M.P.H.	7 M.P.H.	11 M. P. H.	112°F	72°F	0.94"	0.44"	1.16"	8

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

On the whole Gurudeva's health continues as before with occasional rise of temperature and a consequent feeling of exhaustion towards the evening. With the air-conditioning plant set up in his rooms, he is bearing the rigours of the present weather much better than we expected him to. He still continues to be confined to his quarters and nursing arrangements are the same as before. His three newly published works—a book of short stories entitled গল্পসল্প, and two books of recent verse entitled আরাগ্য and জন্মদিনে go to show how his literary labours have suffered but little on account of long indisposition. His failing health has not been able to undermine the vigour of his mind which reacts as strongly as before to a completely new range of experience.

...

In a homely and intimate ceremony we kept the birthday of Gurudeva on Baisakh 25 ( May 8 ). A brief programme of dance and music was followed by the staging of Gurudeva's short comedy বশীকরণ. Gurudeva was present all through the function. The performance was a great success and a whisper went round that those who missed it—we mean those who had made their annual summer exodus—missed a 'treat'.

...

The country as a whole has given their united offer of love and felicitations to Guru-

deva on the occasion of the completion of his eighty years of life. We are gratified to see that there is everywhere a talk of perpetuating Gurudeva's work in some permanent way. The Samsad 'has already initiated a move in the right direction by their recent decision to earmark a sum of Rs. 10,000/- for the proposed endowment of a Rabindranath Chair of Bengali Literature in Santiniketan. There is no better way to commemorate the occasion. It is yet to be seen what practical shape is given by the public in general to give expression to their spontaneous enthusiasm.

...

The Visva-Bharati has recently published an important bulletin embodying the educational principles of Gurudeva as enunciated in his two essays on the ideals of asrama life in theory and in practice. The second essay which deals with the early days at Santiniketan will be of particular interest to many of our readers.

...

We had the pleasure of having the well-known poet and litterateur Sj. Buddhadeva Bose with us during the latter part of May. His stay greatly enlivened Gurudeva who had long discussions with him on the form and spirit of Bengali poetry, on painting and on other topics.

...

A representative from Tipperah Durbar especially deputed by His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur, conferred in the evening of May 13, at an impressive function, the title of "Bharat Bhaskar" ( Sun of India ) on Gurudeva.

It may be recalled that recently His Highness held a special Rabindra Jayanti Durbar where a proclamation was read out signifying the Maharaja's desire to commemorate the Eightieth Birthday of Gurudeva by conferring on him the aforesaid title in recognition of his long and friendly relationship with the royal house and his many-sided achievements in the field of literature.

The ceremony was held at Uttarayana, Gurudeva was conducted to the decorated verandah in his invalid chair and personally received the Robkari bearing the royal sign manual under the special lotus seal of the House of Tipperah.

Gurudeva in a short reply which was read out by Rathindranath Tagore, thanked H. H. the Maharaja for the honour conferred upon him and said:—

This is an occasion to be specially reminded of and to remember the honour that was at one time accorded me unexpectedly by the royal house of Tipperah. Such an instance is rare in history. When Maharaja Birchandra Manikya sent to me his messenger conveying to me the message of how he had discovered in my youthful writings the earnest of a great literary future, it was hardly possible for me to wholeheartedly accept what he said. He knew I was young and my literary output was inconsiderable. He felt hurt to note that most of the reading public of Bengal

in those days dismissed my efforts as flights of puerile fancy. It was one of his proposals to buy up a fully-equipped press with a large sum of money in order to undertake the publishing of de-luxe editions of my literary works. At the time he was in Kurseong for a change of air and unfortunately for me he died soon after he came down to Calcutta.

I thought most probably his death would mean the snapping of the bonds of friendship which bound me to the royal house of Tipperah. But it was not so. Maharaja Radhakishore who succeeded, inherited his father's affection and regard for the boy-poet. In spite of his deep preoccupation with state administration not for a day did he put me out of his mind. He was unstinted in his affection and his liberal hospitality was constantly at my disposal. At the time the Tipperah Durbar was rife with suspicion and intrigue; the Maharaja was always afraid lest my position might be compromised by surreptitious insults. He once even told me how he wished me to freely come to him disregarding the machinations of his ill-disposed courtiers. During the short time he was in the throne I never hesitated to act up to his suggestion. Such friendly relation between the ruler of a kingdom and an immature poet whose reputation then was in the realm of a distant and illusory possibility, was and still is, as I have already said, a rare phenomenon of history.

Today that same honour from that same royal house, has been conferred on me in my old age when I have but a few years to live.

## The Land Of Heart's Desire

By Buddhadeva Bose

For poets, artists and philosophers, for all who use their brains in one way or another, Santiniketan is the land of heart's desire. Amid the arid regions of philistinism and vulgarity that lie all around us, this is a blissful land, splendid in its loneliness, where culture is respected for its own sake and the dignity of man, *as a man*, recognised. The world meets at Santiniketan, it is not a part of Bengal nor a remote, exotic region of India, and yet it expresses all that is most beautiful in our Indian heritage. It is remarkable how the place absorbs foreigners, at the same time teaching them true national pride: to be a true Englishman, a true Chinese or, for that matter, a true Indian one must come to Santiniketan. There is a subtle chemistry by which is vanity turned to decent human pride, a quality crushed by modern city life; there is a strength which overpowers cynicism, snobbism and cunning, and those who come to scoff go away in humility. The spirit of India is here, as incarnated in the life and works of Rabindranath; it permeates thought, speech, actions, houses, clothes, furniture, everything; here alone we find our own ideal of the good life put into practice, an ideal that has nothing narrow, or dogmatic in it, that has assimilated the whole of modern European culture instead of being conquered by it, and brought about a rare fusion of East and West which is truly representative of modern India. India is an enigma not to foreigners alone but also to ourselves, we do not know which way to look for a true picture of our own country. The peasant who, himself hungry, gives us our food is, in a sense, the symbol of India, the symbol that the Mahatma has taken upon himself. But misery is never meant to be worshipped, it is a thing to be fought against, to be blotted out of existence, and we are all looking forward to the day when India will have a new symbol of joy, hope and courage. Meanwhile, come to Santiniketan to see India in her glory. Between the misery and the glory lie our decaying middle classes, the sham culture of the cities, the crookedness of village life and the craft of self-advancement that passes by the name of politics. And none of these is India.

I have just returned after about a fortnight's stay at Santiniketan. It was an enchanted existence. Santiniketan offers the most suitable mode of living for an artist. There art is not an adornment, nor an attitude to assume on special occasions, it is one's whole existence. Life is surrounded by Art and Nature, one acting as complementary to the other. The little low houses, jutting out here and there, do not break the flatness of the immense horizon; they seem a part of the landscape itself. Brown bare earth spreading on all sides, the tall sparse palms, the ancient trees of the *asrama* where hundreds of birds sing, the unstinted benediction of the sky—all these fill the senses with joy and the heart with loveliness. Indoors, I was particularly struck by the low, unassuming and beautiful furniture, combining originality, economy and comfort. The most trivial thing of use is a thing of beauty; one can feel there are brains and a profound artistic sense behind each little thing of daily use: nothing is banned except ostentation, everything is accepted except the commonplace. On the whole, life is simple and unconventional; one may wear anything and speak to any



stranger. There are ceremonies but no formalities, quiet obedience and co-operation but no stiff disciplinarianism ; work has all the joy of play and all the seriousness of sacrament. Nobody is idle and nobody is overworked ; the human relationship between man and man is supreme in each case, even in the case of domestics who are ordered but not ordered about. Such courtesy, such flawless refinement, such perfection of hospitality as I have experienced in the Poet's household are, it is true, incomparable and unapproachable, but their influence is perceptible all over the place ; teacher or student, boy or girl, everybody seems more natural and richer in human qualities than the most correctly polite gentleman in Calcutta.

Happy were the days we spent at Santiniketan, and happy the nights when we lay in an open verandah and gazed at starry skies till we fell asleep. It was delightful to meet old friends and make new ones, and it would be no exaggeration to say that the splendid and varied company we had, enlivened every waking hour with talk, laughter and song. But the greatest thing, of course, was the meetings with Gurudev. This is the first time I met him after his last illness, and at first he did not seem ill at all, he looked so fresh and cheerful. Every morning he would send for us, and often in the evenings when he would sit out in the open verandah we would come and sit at his feet. His conversation was brilliant, illuminating, intoxicating. We would return delirious, drunk with words. But after some days there was a set-back in his health, and the rainbow-stream of words thinned down.

I shall not attempt here to reproduce any part of the Poet's conversation, for that can be done only in his own words. Nor shall I try to describe him. I believe that this phase of Tagore's career is an epic subject. For who can describe this great man—one of the greatest ever born—in his unuttered and unutterable conflict between flesh and spirit ? Which words can describe how cruel this bondage of flesh that is stifling most of the poems and stories and songs simmering in his brain ? The story of the pictures that haunt him and melt away unembodied can only be told in noble verse. I have seen in him the "old man's frenzy" that Yeats talked about, and now I know what Eliot means when he says that he does not want to hear

"Of the wisdom of old men, but rather of their folly,  
Their fear of fear and frenzy, their fear of possession,  
Of belonging to another, or to others, or to God.  
'The only wisdom we can hope to acquire  
Is the wisdom of humility ; humility is endless."

Today Tagore has arrived at that wisdom which is the wisdom of humility. Never does he complain about the breakdown of the body-machine, and perhaps he thinks of his body as mere machine dissociated from himself. Never in his life was he less religious. He does not want to belong to God and is emphatically re-iterating the fact that he is of the Earth and the Earth is his. At eighty he loves life more intensely, more tenderly than he did at eighteen ; he is passionately interested in vast and voluminous life, in every little living thing, and to me at least it comes as a revelation that he is a great lover of animals. That he has not developed "the wisdom of old men", that he has not become "godly and grave", that every day he is growing more and more sympathetic to "the folly of living and loving"—this seems to me the supreme measure of his greatness. To have come in close contact with him at this stage has been for me an invaluable experience which I shall never forget. These days have been wonderful: my life has been blessed and enriched.

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( Continued from page 94. )

Apart from this, what makes me even more happy and proud is the fact that the recognition has come from a Maharaja who has by his recent act of graciously sheltering and helping innumerable people in distress has really proved himself a father and protector to those who look up to him. He has thus proved himself worthy of his ancient royal lineage. Today when the whole of Bengal blesses the house of Tipperah, when her glory has blossomed forth to the fullest, this honour has been offered me by the royal hands of the Maharaja. In accepting his gift I wish that his righteousness may help him more and more on the way of greater good and nobler beneficence. Let my feeble voice in the very last days of my life join with the voice of the whole country in blessing the Maharaja and wishing him a long and glorious reign.

...

The problem of leprosy control has for sometime been engaging the attention of the Village Welfare Department at Sriniketan. Some preliminary investigations were made by the Asst. Medical Officer, Dr. S. Ganguly. But as the problem was found to be very difficult, it was considered necessary to obtain expert opinion.

Dr. P. Sen, M. B., Publicity Officer of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, stayed at Sriniketan for about a week during the last month and carried out a thorough investigation in some villages in the neighbourhood. Careful enquiries will now be made regarding the living condition, and the possibilities of isolating the really infectious cases in and outside the village, and steps will be taken for the treatment of the exist-

ing cases and for periodical examination of the children and contacts of infectious cases. It is hoped that effective arrangements will be made at an early date for preventing the spread of this terrible disease in this area.

...

The famine situation in the district shows no improvement. On the other hand, with the advent of the cultivation season, while the labouring classes are getting some employment, the distress among the agriculturists is growing more and more acute.

The Marwari Relief Association are continuing their work at the Laldaha Centre from which they are operating in two unions. They are being helped by our workers who visit the villages regularly.

Our workers are directly in charge of the whole of Taltore and Supur Unions and some villages in Bolpur and Ruppur Unions. In addition to the distribution of doles, clothes are being distributed and rural industries are being organised and assisted. Two medical centres for the treatment of diseases have been opened at Amdahara and Kashba. The construction of a well at Jaljalia has been completed while 4 other wells at Bandanga, Paruldanga, Supur and Lohagara are in progress.

The distress among cattle for want of fodder and water is still very acute and will continue to be so till the beginning of July. In order to deal with the situation, two feeding centres have been opened at Ballabhpur and Laldaha where feeding tickets have been issued to 75 cattle, while 31 heads of cattle are in charge of our workers. Some of them have been purchased outright from poor people who are unable to maintain them and wanted money for their own expenses.

We have to state with regret that the work of relief is suffering from want of funds and we once more appeal to our members and readers to help us with generous contributions.

Total donation to the Visva-Bharati Famine Relief Fund amounted to Rs. 5,503-2-9 on May 31, 1941. Out of this a sum of Rs. 2,691-2-3 has already been spent in relief work in the eight villages under our jurisdiction. The main items on the expenditure side are:—distribution of doles and clothes, advancing money to start small industries, supply of water, protection of cattle etc.

...

Besides a number of daily papers, both in English and Bengali, quite a few Special Tagore Numbers have been brought out by Calcutta magazines. In this connection we would like to specially mention the *Kavita* and the *Parichaya* both of which contain excellent studies on the many-sided genius of Gurudeva. The Tagore Number of the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette* published only the other day has many commendable features and will be valuable as a reference book for all lovers of Tagore Literature. Not many will be able to rival its journalistic excellence.

...

We are looking forward to the Tagore Birthday Number which the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* is bringing out this month. It will be a very comprehensive publication, covering almost every aspect of Gurudeva's life and work. No mere homages fill its pages, but scholarly and critical papers written by some of the most competent and leading authorities in the field. As a first hand acquaintance with Gurudeva's writings in the original is essential for such

study, most of the contributors are naturally Bengali writers of repute. The Number is profusely illustrated with reproductions (some in colour) of Gurudeva's paintings, specimens of his hand-writing as well as photographs of him at various stages of his life. A chronicle (year by year) of the eighty years of Gurudeva's life, a detailed bibliography of both his Bengali and English books add special merit to the Number. Altogether it will be a unique volume, of about 300 pages (antique paper), invaluable to all who are interested in the personality and achievement of India's noblest genius. Despite the heavy expenses of bringing out a publication so profusely illustrated and well got up, it has been priced at Rs. 5/- only, in order to bring it within the reach of as many people as possible. Regular subscribers of *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* will get it in lieu of two consequent Numbers (for May and August). A few copies, artistically bound at Sriniketan (all leather batik binding) will be available on payment of Re. 1/8/- extra.

...

A collection of religious books and Puranas has been made over to our library by S<sup>r</sup>j. Abanindranath Tagore. They will greatly enhance the value of a section in our library and will also fill up gaps where they existed. Many of the books are now either rare or out of print. We accord our grateful thanks to the distinguished donor.

...

Up to date contributions towards the Andrews Memorial Fund amount to Rs. 43,212-12-5. The sum is only the tenth part of the amount required to enable us to put the envisaged scheme into practice. In the meantime the need of a Andrews Memorial Hall and a well-equipped hospital grows more and more imperative.

...

We shortly intend bringing out an Alumni Register. Not many years ago presiding over the annual general meeting of the Asramika Sangha, Charlie Andrews put forth a suggestion to that effect. It is evident that this useful publication cannot be undertaken unless we are given the closest co operation by our ex-students wherever they might be. We intend writing further on the matter in future.

The first anniversary of the death of Kalimohan Ghosh was solemnly observed at a meeting he'd at Sriniketan on May 12. At a subsequent meeting held at Bhubandanga, inmates of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, villagers from neighbouring villages and the public of Bolpur town offered their united homage of respect to the memory of Kalimohan. His life of dedicated service was gratefully referred to by many speakers representing different organisations.

### WEATHER REPORT

The following is a comparative monthly digest of the meteorological observations at the Sriniketan Observatory for the month of May.

Lat. 23°-39' N.

Long. 87°-42'E.

Height above M. S. L.-191 ft.

Month and Year	Av. Atmos. Press. at 8 hrs.	Av. Atmos. Temp. at 8 hrs.	Av. Humidity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity at 8 hrs.	Av. Wind Velocity past 24 hrs.	Do—highest	Highest Max. Temp.	Lowest Min. Temp.	Total Rainfall during month	Highest Fall in a day.	Total Fall upto Apr. 41.	No. of Rainy days
May. 1940	29.676"	85.2°F	71%	5 M.P.H.	7 M.P.H.	7 M. P. H.	113°F	61°F	2.70"	1.58"	5.91"	7
May. 1941	29.658"	84.9°F	74%	5 M.P.H.	7 M.P.H.	14 M. P. H.	113°F	68°F	5.15"	2.20"	6.81"	6

### NOTICE

From the beginning of this month the Visva-Bharati Book Shop will be situated at 2, College Square. This removal will mean snapping of old topographical bonds for many of us for whom 210, Cornwallis Street will long remain a landmark with many associations. It is to be noted however that the present premises are centrally situated in the very heart of the book-loving Calcutta.

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